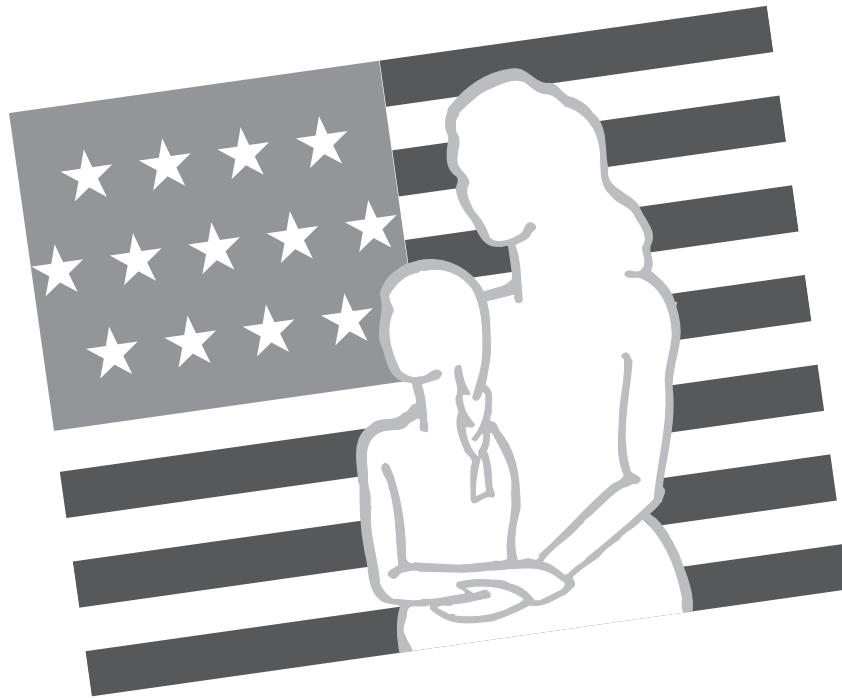


America's Commitment:

**Federal Programs Benefiting Women
and
New Initiatives
as follow-up to the
UN Fourth World Conference on Women**

PRESIDENT'S INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON WOMEN



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MAY 1997

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The President's Interagency Council on Women

On August 26, 1995, prior to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, President Clinton announced the formation of an interagency Women's Council. The President said:

"The (Women's) Conference is going to talk about education and domestic violence and grassroots economics, employment, health care, political participation ... And we don't intend to walk away from it when it's over. I'm going to establish an interagency council on women to make sure that all the effort and good ideas actually get implemented when we get back home."

This intragovernmental body is charged with coordinating the implementation of the Platform for Action adopted at Beijing, including the U.S. commitments announced at the Conference. The Council is also charged with developing related initiatives to further women's progress and engage in outreach and public education to support the successful implementation of the Conference agreements.

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton serves as Honorary Chair of the Council. Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala chaired the Council from its inception through March 1997. On March 8, 1997, the President announced that Secretary of State Madeleine Albright had agreed to serve as the next Chair of the Council, following the strong leadership provided by Secretary Shalala. The Council includes high level representatives from Executive Branch agencies.

The President's Interagency Council on Women

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Note: The Table of Contents follows the structure of the Platform for Action of the UN Fourth World Conference on Women. The President's Interagency Council on Women is charged with implementation of the Platform for Action in the executive branch of the federal government.

New initiatives taken since the UN Conference are indicated by a ♦

Future initiatives are indicated by a ❖

Introduction



The Platform for Action called for economic opportunity and security for women and their families; for quality education and health care throughout the life cycle; for an end to violence against women; for measures to help women and men balance work and family responsibilities; for full participation of women at all levels of political and economic life; for reproductive rights and equality in sexual relations; for respect and opportunity for girls; for equality and non-discrimination under the law; for the promotion of the human rights of women, recognizing that human rights are women's rights and women's rights are human rights and for partnership between women and men based on mutual respect, rights and responsibilities.

Through the President's Interagency Council and the efforts of agency task forces set up by Council representatives, government agencies have analyzed their agencies' current and projected policies and programs and measured them against the goals of the Platform. They have continued the process of discussions and meetings with non-governmental organizations that prepared the U.S. for Beijing, and continue to spur government on as it develops plans for implementation. Through this process, the task forces have identified new initiatives to improve the lives of women and girls; and they are looking towards developing longer range changes in their programs and operations to ensure that the Beijing goals are an integral part of the regular way they conduct business.

In an effort to respond to the Platform as fully as possible, this report contains many policies and programs that have long been in place. However, there has been considerable activity since Beijing, and many new plans for implementation have been made.

Initiatives are identified as follows:

New initiatives taken since the UN Conference are indicated by a ♦

Future initiatives are indicated by a ❖

We have used the outline of the Platform for Action — the 12 Critical Areas of Concern that it identified and the accompanying Strategic Objectives for each Area of Concern. Since the Platform is a global document intended to be tailored to individual countries, the fit is not always perfect. There is at times a tendency to repetition, and at other times, confusion over where some American program or action would best fit. We have tried to avoid needless repetition, cross referencing to other sections. For example, actions on Environmental Justice will be found in the chapter on poverty rather than the chapter on the environment.

This is a compilation and condensation of agency submissions. For further information, please consult the agency contact list in the back.

A. Women and Poverty



Platform for Action Strategic Objectives:

- A.1. Review, adopt and maintain macroeconomic policies and development strategies that address the needs and efforts of women in poverty.
- A.2. Revise laws and administrative practices to ensure women's equal rights and access to economic resources.
- A.3. Provide women with access to savings and credit mechanisms and institutions.
- A.4. Develop gender-based methodologies and conduct research to address the feminization of poverty.

A.1. Review, adopt and maintain macroeconomic policies and development strategies that address the needs and efforts of women in poverty.

Many departments and agencies of the federal government are engaged in efforts to reduce poverty, to address the needs and efforts of women in poverty, and to aid poor people in moving out of poverty.

HOUSING

RENTAL HOUSING

The Department of Housing and Urban Development's programs predominantly serve women: 72% of all households receiving HUD housing assistance (including Section 8 certificates and vouchers, assisted housing, and public housing) are headed by women; 78% of families living in public housing are headed by women, and, of them, more than two-thirds live at or below the poverty line.

Because a disproportionate share of the elderly population is female, and female-headed households are more likely to be poor, HUD programs for the elderly tend to serve women. Elderly women occupy about three-quarters of all HUD-assisted, one-person households; about 30% of all private, project-based, HUD subsidized units; and 25% of all public housing units. Three-fourths of all public and subsidized housing residents over age 65 are women. Most of these female-headed households consist of women, over 70, living alone.

Certain HUD programs implemented by the Office of Public and Indian Housing largely benefit women. The programs provide social services, broaden training and opportunities, and facilitate the transition from welfare dependency to paid work:

- **Family Self-Sufficiency Program.** This couples HUD housing assistance with public and private support services such as child care, transportation, education and training, substance abuse treatment and counseling, homemaking and parenting skills, money and household management training, and homeownership counseling.
- **Foster Child Care Program.** This helps keep families together by providing housing when lack of adequate housing may result in children being placed in foster care or prevent the children from being discharged from foster care.
- **Early Childhood Development Program.** This provides educationally-oriented child care services for the children of public and Indian housing residents to enable the parents to seek education, training, and/or employment.
- **Family Investment Centers.** The Centers provide educational and employment opportunities to help public housing residents make the transition from welfare dependency to economic independence.

In addition, efforts to encourage formation of public housing Resident Management Corporations give public housing residents — the majority of whom are women — training and leadership opportunities.

◆ In an effort to better serve women, HUD has initiated the following:

- Roundtable discussions at HUD and at public and assisted housing sites between HUD staff and housing residents to provide a forum for HUD policymakers to hear the issues important to women and for women to raise issues and concerns regarding housing, environment, health, safety, and jobs.
- Production of a video titled “Ain’t I A Woman?” aimed at giving women a voice and providing HUD policymakers and the public with a “gendered” perspective on public housing.
- Support for local programs that provide incentives for fathers to reunite with their families in public housing, in response to the President’s 1995 Memorandum to Strengthen the Role of Fathers in Families.

RURAL HOUSING

Many Department of Agriculture (USDA) rural development programs are aimed specifically at

low-income households, including loans and grants for housing. Through direct and guaranteed loans, as well as grant programs, USDA programs help finance new or improved housing for over 65,000 very-low to moderate income families annually. Over 2,000,000 families now own their homes as a result of rural home ownership programs. USDA also provides loans to support development of rental housing for low-income persons. While these programs are not designed specifically to assist women, they are an important form of assistance for low-income rural women and their families.

HOME ENERGY

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, administered by HHS Administration for Children and Families, provides grants to states, territories, Indian tribes and tribal organizations to assist low-income households in meeting the costs of home heating and cooling needs. Payments may be made directly to eligible households or to home energy suppliers who comply with legislative provisions. Funds can also be used to help low-income households deal with energy-related crises or pay for repairs to make their homes more energy efficient.

HOMEOWNERSHIP

The National Partners in Homeownership is an unprecedented public-private partnership formed in 1995 to dramatically increase homeownership opportunity in the U.S. It consists of 56 national organizations representing lenders, real estate professionals, homebuilders, non-profit housing providers, and federal, state, and local governments. Its goal is to achieve an all-time high rate of homeownership by the end of the year 2000.

- ◆ **Homeownership for Women (HOW).** In June 1996, the Partnership launched the HOW initiative. HOW partnership members include such organizations as the National Council of Negro Women, the Women's Division of the United Methodist Church, Business and Professional Women USA, the YWCA, the American Association of Retired Persons, Women Construction Owners and Executives, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD provided \$250,000 in start-up funds to design education and counseling programs for potential female homebuyers. The HOW initiative:
 - Featured a women's homeownership roundtable discussion at HUD's regional homeownership summits held in summer 1996. All regional homeownership summits featured a women's homeownership advocate during the underserved markets portion of the program.
 - Held a women's homeownership counseling training conference via satellite March 6, 1997. The conference was broadcast to 57 HUD offices across the country and attended by lenders, realtors, builders, local officials, educators, and non-profits. It included a discussion of new and innovative ways to reach women in the homebuying process.
 - Expands an existing toll-free number (1-888-HOME-4US) to provide free information packets about homeownership opportunities for women.

- Creates targeted education and counseling programs, public service advertising, booklets, posters and videos targeted for potential women homebuyers.
- Will create an interactive Web site providing women's homeownership counseling information as part of the current HUD Web page (<http://www.hud.gov/>).

FOOD

Nutrition/Malnutrition Initiative. The HHS Administration on Aging's Nutrition/Malnutrition Initiative is working to highlight the seriousness and prevalence of malnutrition and food insecurity among the elderly, promote good nutritional practices among older Americans and provide technical assistance to nutrition providers. The nutrition program funded by the Older Americans Act serves a predominantly poor and female elderly population.

The Department of Agriculture food assistance programs are as follows:

- **The Food Stamp Program.** This is generally available to households with gross monthly incomes less than 130% of the federal poverty line and net monthly incomes below 100% of the line (e.g. \$20,280 for a family of four). Half of all food stamp benefits go to single mother households with children. About 60% of food stamp program participants are female. President Clinton has supported proposals to restore fairness to federal safety net programs which include creating and funding a real food stamp work requirement, helping families with high housing costs, and providing benefits which recognize the cost of living.
- **The Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).** WIC, including WIC Farmer's Markets, is available to families with incomes below 185% of the poverty line (e.g. \$28,860 for a family of four); in 1994, over 60% of WIC participants had incomes below the poverty level.
- **The National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs.** The programs provide free or subsidized meals to children depending on their families' income levels.
- **The Homeless Children Nutrition Program.** This provides reimbursement for meals served to children under the age of six in emergency shelters.
- **Commodity distribution programs.** These provide food assistance to low-income persons. Several of these programs are targeted at specific groups, such as the elderly or persons living on Indian reservations. USDA support for these programs is provided both through cash assistance and through provision of commodities purchased specifically for this purpose.
- **International assistance.** USDA provides over \$800 million of food assistance for humanitarian aid programs around the world. USDA and the Agency for International Development (USAID) distribute approximately 10 billion pounds of U.S. farm products annually through these programs.

MINIMUM WAGE

- ◆ **Minimum Wage Law.** The Small Business Jobs Protection Act of 1996 (amending the Fair Labor Standards Act), among other provisions, provides for a two-step 90-cent-per-hour increase in the federal minimum wage, from \$4.25 to \$4.75 an hour on October 1, 1996 and to \$5.15 on September 1, 1997. This increase will affect the nearly 10 million Americans, including some 5.7 million women, who earn less than \$5.15 an hour.
- ◆ **Educational Outreach.** After the law's enactment, the Department of Labor Employment Standards Administration's Wage and Hour Division embarked on an educational effort to ensure that businesses understood their changing obligations and that employees were aware of their new rights. The agency used nationwide press releases, the Department of Labor's Internet home page, and direct mailings to newsletters, interested organizations, and advocacy groups to pass on newly-developed compliance documents and other related minimum wage materials.
- ❖ Proposed regulations implementing the 1996 legislation are now being prepared for publication by DOL.

WORKING CONDITIONS

About 57% of minimum wage workers in the U.S. are adult women, many of whom are employed in low-wage service or retail industries (e.g., domestic or food service, health care, janitorial and guard services). Large numbers of women are also employed in the nation's garment industry, both in factories and at home.

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) offers minimum wage and overtime pay protection to more than half the United States workforce. While these labor laws apply equally to men and women, they advance the economic status of women in the paid labor force. The Department of Labor (DOL) Employment Standards Administration's Wage and Hour Division enforces and administers U.S. labor standards laws including the FLSA.

Wage and Hour concentrates its enforcement efforts in the low-wage industries, where the most vulnerable people are employed and the worst violations found. Effective targeted enforcement of the FLSA promotes compliance with labor standards and reduces the exploitation of these low-wage earning women.

- ❖ **Enforcement Initiatives.** Wage and Hour has established enforcement initiatives for FY 1997 to increase compliance in specified targeted areas: (1) the garment industry; (2) agriculture; and (3) health care, as well as in child labor and other low wage industries (e.g., restaurants, temporary help, and hotels/motels) including those in rural areas and small towns. The initiatives involve a multi-pronged strategy of enforcement, education/outreach, and recognition to boost compliance rates.
- ◆ **(1) "No-Sweat" Campaign.** Many workers in the garment industry are paid substantially below the minimum wage and frequently are forced to work in sweatshop conditions. According to DOL, the industry will come into compliance with wage and

hour laws only if the “asset holders” — manufacturers and retailers with the greatest economic leverage in the industry — are enlisted as industry enforcers.

The Campaign has been underway since 1995 and its accomplishments have included commitments by more than 50 manufacturing firms to Wage and Hour’s Compliance Monitoring Agreement to regularly monitor contractors for compliance; a reduction in minimum wage and overtime violations as a result of monitoring programs and recovery of \$8.4 million for 29,000 workers. Four DOL-convened summits, and public service announcements, called for the garment industry to eradicate sweatshops, educated the public on compliance and raised awareness. A Trendsetters List recognized retailers and manufacturers which have assumed responsibility for monitoring work practices of contractors.

- ❖ **Code of Conduct.** On April 14, 1997, the Apparel Industry Partnership, composed of leaders from the footwear and apparel industry, labor, non-governmental organizations, and consumer groups, announced a Code of Conduct and independent external monitoring systems for manufacturers to assure that clothes and shoes are made under decent and humane working conditions. The DOL provided critical assistance to the Partnership to achieve this historic agreement.
- ❖ Wage and Hour’s targeted initiatives for the “No Sweat” campaign will continue the multi-pronged strategy of enforcement, education/outreach, and recognition to further boost compliance rates. To improve enforcement, Wage and Hour will:
 - Target enforcement sweeps in major garment centers.
 - Notify manufacturers of “hot goods” produced by their contractors. [The “hot goods” provisions of the FLSA generally make it illegal to ship goods in interstate commerce which were made in violation of the minimum wage or overtime requirements of the FLSA or produced in an establishment where child labor violations occurred in the last 30 days.]
 - Identify retailers where “hot goods” can be traced.
 - Continue to issue quarterly enforcement reports.
 - Conduct a compliance survey in the New York metropolitan area.

To increase education, Wage and Hour will:

- Conduct four compliance monitoring workshops to provide the industry with information on how to implement an effective monitoring program to ensure that goods are manufactured in compliance with labor standards.
- Continue initiatives to publicize “No Sweat” campaign activities and garner the public’s interest to pressure the industry to improve compliance. This will include working with a group of socially responsible businesses which have supported the initiative and with religious leaders.

To increase recognition, Wage and Hour will:

- Continue its Trendsetters List, which recognizes retailers and manufacturers that have assumed responsibility for monitoring the labor practices of their contractors.
- ❖ **(2) Agriculture.** Adopting the strategy used in the “No Sweat” campaign, DOL’s Wage and Hour will place legal and moral responsibility for the substandard conditions created by farm labor contractors on those who hire them and benefit from their services: growers and processors. Among the innovative tools to be used in this effort will be vigorous application of the “joint employment” standard under the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA) and the FLSA, and the use of the “hot goods” provisions of the FLSA. Further, given the reality of ever-decreasing resources to address these problems, Wage and Hour is seeking to leverage available resources to impact the industry and make long-lasting changes for farmworkers.
- ❖ **(3) Health Care Industry.** DOL’s Wage and Hour will carry out an education/outreach and enforcement initiative — including a compliance survey — aimed at low-wage occupations in the nursing home industry.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

[See also discussion under F. 4.]

Several Department of Agriculture food programs aim to help low-income women achieve independence through training and employment:

- **Food Stamp Employment and Training Program.** This requires nonexempt able-bodied women to seek employment or participate in an education or training activity designed to lead to employment. Each state determines the types of programs and services offered. Programs can include Adult Basic Education, General Educational Development (GED) training, English as a Second Language, and vocational training (including non-traditional careers for women).
- **Food and Nutrition Education Program.** The expanded program employs low-income women who form a cadre of skilled paraprofessionals in 725 rural and urban sites located throughout the 50 states and territories.
- **The Children, Youth and Families at Risk Program.** The program recruits, trains and supports women living in poor communities to become leaders, teachers, mentors, and tutors of children and youth. Many participants complete GEDs and enter two- or four-year college programs, and many have become viably employed.

Future USDA initiatives:

- ❖ Incorporate more entry-level, esteem-building employment opportunities (including on-the-job training for women with limited skills) into USDA programs and activities.

- ❖ Through its Extension programs, encourage states to offer educational programs designed to ease the transition from welfare to economic self-sufficiency.

WELFARE REFORM

Currently the federal government is engaged in a major reform of its welfare programs mandated by legislation enacted in 1996, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (see below). At the time of publication, many provisions of the Act are just beginning to go into effect, and proposed amendments are under consideration.

The Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is responsible for federal programs which promote the economic and social well-being of families, children, individuals and communities. Through its federal leadership, ACF sees: families and individuals empowered to increase their own economic independence and productivity; strong, healthy, supportive communities having a positive impact on the quality of life and the development of children; partnerships with individuals, front-line service providers, communities, American Indian tribes, Native communities, states and Congress that enable solutions which transcend traditional agency boundaries; services planned, reformed, and integrated to improve needed access; and a strong commitment to working with people with developmental disabilities, refugees, and migrants to address their needs, strengths, and abilities.

- ❖ **The Welfare Reform Law.** The “Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996,” the Welfare Reform Law, makes dramatic changes in the nation’s welfare system to realize the goal of supporting recipients’ transition from welfare to work. The new law contains strong work requirements, a performance bonus to reward states for meeting the goals of the law, state maintenance of effort requirements, comprehensive child support enforcement requirements, and supports for families moving from welfare to work — including increased funding for child care and guaranteed medical coverage. Families who have received assistance for five cumulative years (or less, at state option) will be ineligible for federal cash aid. States will be permitted to exempt 20% of their caseload from the time limit, and states will have the option to provide non-cash assistance and vouchers to families that reach the time limit using Social Services Block Grant or state funds. The ACF is responsible for implementation of this law.
- ❖ **Work Requirements.** With few exceptions, recipients under the new law must work after two years of assistance. To count toward state work requirements, recipients will be required to participate in unsubsidized or subsidized employment, on-the-job training, work experience, community service, 12 months of vocational training, or provide child care service to individuals who are participating in community service. Single parents with a child under six who cannot find child care cannot be penalized for failure to meet the work requirements. States can exempt from the work requirement single parents with children under age one. Under the new plan, states develop personal responsibility plans for recipients identifying the education,

training, and job placement services needed to move them into the workforce. The law allows states to create jobs by taking money now used for welfare checks and using it to create community service jobs or to provide income subsidies or hiring incentives for potential employers. The law guarantees that women eligible for welfare under the old rules will continue to receive health coverage for their families, including at least one year of transitional Medicaid when they leave welfare for work.

- ❖ **Welfare to Work.** The Small Business Administration will take a leadership role in helping people move from welfare to work to self-employment, microenterprise development and employment creation. The SBA is developing a welfare to work strategy which promotes human capital and economic development utilizing the agency's business training, education and financial assistance program resources. Successful and diverse programs such as the Women's Business Centers, the Small Business Development Centers, SCORE, Business Information Centers, One Stop Capital Shops and the microloan program are appropriate vehicles to partner with community based organizations, small businesses and small business trade coalitions to develop self-sufficiency and economic empowerment of women as well as reviving economically disadvantaged communities.
- ❖ **Welfare Resource Guide.** In FY 1997 the Department of Labor Women's Bureau will publish the Welfare Resource Guide with information on model employment training programs around the country geared to women's needs. Designed to assist state and local policymakers and program providers, it will identify successful programs for preparing potential women workers for the workplace.

SUPPLEMENTAL SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

Individuals who are 65 or older, blind or disabled and whose income and resources are below certain limits, may be eligible to receive monthly payments under the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program:

Restrictions on Disability. The basic definition of disability for an adult states that a person must have a condition that is severe enough to prevent him or her from doing substantial work and is expected to last for at least 12 months or result in death. Due to the new Welfare Reform Law of 1996, the Social Security Administration has set new and stricter guidelines to determine if children with disabilities meet the definition of disability: a physical or mental condition or conditions that can be medically proven and which result in marked or severe functional limitations. Proposals to minimize any adverse consequences that the legislation will have on disabled children and their families include the continuation of Medicaid coverage for children who lose their SSI benefits as a result of the change in the definition of disability. The Social Security Administration is developing plans to track the effects of the implementation of the law, and will recommend revisions and improvements that are indicated.

Restrictions on Legal Immigrants. The 1996 welfare and immigration reform legislation severely restricts the participation of many legal immigrants in the SSI program. The legislation places a five year limit on SSI eligibility for refugees, asylees and certain other legal immigrants. SSI has estimated that these changes will reduce the numbers of legal immigrants who receive SSI benefits by about 500,000. Proposals to address these concerns include: that there be no exception to the restrictions against SSI eligibility for legal immigrants who become blind or disabled, including children, after their entry into the country; that the five year period of SSI eligibility for refugees, asylees and the certain other noncitizens be extended to seven years.

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- ❖ **The Child Care and Development Block Grant.** The Welfare Reform law also restructures child care into a single, integrated child care system, and funds state efforts to provide quality child care services for low-income families with parents who work or who attend school. Administered by the Department of Health and Human Services, the new law provides \$14 billion in child care funding over six years. States must maintain their own spending levels (of FY 1994 or 1995, whichever is greater) in order to access additional funds.
- ❖ **Head Start.** This national program, administered by the Administration on Children and Families of HHS, provides comprehensive services to America's low-income children and their families. Specific services for children focus on education, socio-emotional development, physical and mental health, and nutrition. In FY 1997, \$4 billion will enable approximately 800,000 pre-school children from low income families to participate in 1,480 local Head Start programs. The goal of the program is to serve 1 million children by 2002.

DISTRESSED AREAS AND SPECIAL POPULATIONS

The Social Services Block Grant and the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG), both administered by the Department of Health and Human Services, help many American people achieve economic self-sufficiency through programs for the states, Puerto Rico, the territories and insular areas, the District of Columbia and Indian tribes.

The Social Services Block Grant. This provides states with funds for social services to help individuals achieve economic self-sufficiency, to prevent or remedy neglect, abuse or exploitation of children or adults, to avoid or reduce inappropriate institutionalization, and to provide appropriate referral for institutional care. The most frequently provided services are child day care, home based services which help individuals or families with household and personal care, protective services which prevent or remedy abuse, neglect or exploitation of children or adults, special services for the physically, mentally or emotionally disabled, and social support. In FY 1997 \$2.5 billion was provided to states.

The Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities. These communities, designated by the Departments of Housing and Urban Development and Agriculture, comprise 104 distressed

areas, 9 urban and 3 rural empowerment zones and 95 enterprise communities. In FY 1993, Congress appropriated \$1 billion to be targeted to them. The urban zones and 95 enterprise communities receive Social Service Block Grants (administered by the Department of Health and Human Services). The funds aid the poor by integrating services in low-income, high risk communities.

The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). The CSBG was created to provide employment, education, housing, income management, energy, health, and emergency services for the poor. In FY 1997, \$490 million was available. Most funds are allocated to approximately 950 community action agencies or migrant or seasonal farmworker organizations. Among the 1997 Community Services programs, \$27.3 was available for the Urban and Rural Community Economic Development program; \$12 million for the National Youth Sports Program; \$4 million for the Community Food and Nutrition Program; and \$3.5 million for Rural Communities Facilities.

Special Populations. HHS has also established services programs for special populations. These populations include people with disabilities, mental retardation and developmental disabilities, Native Americans, refugees, and runaways and homeless youth.

A.2. Revise laws and administrative practices to ensure women's equal rights and access to economic resources.

CHILD SUPPORT

- ❖ **The Child Support Enforcement (CSE) Program.** This is a federal/state partnership program. As part of the new welfare reform law, state CSE programs under federal guidelines will be increasing parental location efforts, broadening outreach programs to establish paternity, organizing and enforcing support orders, instituting privacy safeguards in cases of domestic violence, and increasing the collection of payments. The law established a Federal Case Registry and National Directory of New Hires to track delinquent parents across state lines. It also requires that employers report all new hires information to state agencies for transmittal to the National Directory of New Hires.
- ◆ **Federal Government Compliance.** President Clinton's Executive Order 12953 on child support enforcement directed all federal agencies to become a model employer in enforcement of child support. The Department of Defense provides procedures for involuntary allotments to pay for spousal and child support. OPM's Work and Family Program Center and the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Child Support Enforcement conduct seminars, distribute child support information kits, and promote awareness of issues and resources to both help federally employed custodial parents who are having difficulty collecting child support payments and ensure that federal employees meet their child support responsibilities.

- ❖ **Interstate Enforcement.** Custody, visitation, child support, and alimony are traditionally handled by state courts. The Child Support Recovery Act, however, includes a provision that makes it a prosecutable federal offense to fail to pay a past due support obligation, with respect to a child residing in another state. The Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section of the Department of Justice Criminal Division is working with the U.S. Attorneys' Offices and the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Child Support Enforcement to review cases with prosecutive merit. At the direction of the President of the United States, the Department of Justice will be reviewing the feasibility of establishing a felony offense for egregious failure to meet child support obligations.
- ❖ The Department of Justice will also work to improve the ability of tribal members to participate in child support and foster-care programs.
- ◆ **Fatherhood Initiative.** There is a government-wide initiative to strengthen the role of fathers in families. In response, for example, the Department of Health and Human Services has expanded its on-going efforts to improve the life chances for all children by strengthening and encouraging the active role of fathers in support of the health and well-being of their children. The Department of Defense is engaged in similar efforts.

HOUSING DISCRIMINATION

Fair Housing. The Fair Housing Act's familial status provisions outlaw discrimination against families with children. In enforcing this act, the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division has filed almost 300 cases on behalf of families unable to obtain housing because a family member is pregnant or the family includes children under age 18. The overwhelming majority of these cases include mothers, many of whom are single mothers. Such discrimination has a devastating effect on low-income families. The Department of Justice handles familial status cases litigated in district court by its Civil Rights Division and U.S. Attorneys' offices, as well as appeals from administrative decisions of the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Department also frequently files amicus briefs in appeals courts in familial status cases litigated by private parties.

Federally assisted housing. Under Presidential Executive Order 12250, the Coordination and Review Section of the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division enforces the nondiscrimination laws applicable to federal assistance programs.

- ❖ The Department of Justice will review agency enforcement efforts concerning the statutes subject to Executive Order 12250 and recommend improvements. In addition, it will provide training on the requirements of statutes prohibiting, among other things, sex discrimination in various agency-assisted programs and activities.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

In February 1994, President Clinton signed Executive Order No. 12898: Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations. The Order directs Federal agencies to:

- make environmental justice part of their work;
- take “appropriate and necessary steps to ensure” that existing laws are implemented “immediately” to redress disproportionate environmental harms; and
- develop an environmental justice strategy to promote nondiscrimination in federal programs substantially affecting human health and the environment and to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse health or environmental effects of government programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations and federally recognized tribes.

In response to the Executive Order, the Environmental Protection Agency’s new Office of Environmental Justice is working with industries and organizations to bring about environmental equity in communities disproportionately affected by pollution. Many of these communities have high numbers of female-headed households. In 1996, EPA awarded more than \$5 million in grants to communities that are working on local solutions to local environmental justice problems.

- ❖ In the future, EPA will increase efforts to reduce critical environmental health risks among women in Alaska Native, U.S./Mexico border, and low-income communities and communities of color that are disproportionately affected by environmental hazard. Activities include:
 - ❖ Creating water supply and wastewater treatment facilities in Alaska Native villages to meet critical sanitation needs for approximately 20,000 indigenous women, men, and children living there and improve drinking water quality in other tribal communities.
 - ❖ Improving water, air, and sanitation conditions and building wastewater treatment facilities in U.S. communities along the U.S./Mexico border. Infants in some of these communities have shown very high occurrences of serious birth defects of the nervous system, which may be correlated with environmental toxins.
 - ❖ Continuing to improve the environmental conditions of urban areas throughout the United States with a large concentration of polluting facilities by promoting compliance, preventing pollution, and cleaning up contaminated properties.

A Department of Justice internal task force coordinates its enforcement of the Environmental Justice Executive Order primarily in the Civil Rights, Civil, and Environment Divisions. The Bureau of Prisons, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Executive Office for United States Attorneys, and the Community Relations Service are also included.

The Department of Justice has developed an internal departmental Environmental Justice Guidance and Strategy to fulfill its obligations under the Executive Order and ensure that DOJ litigation does not have an adverse impact on women in minority or low-income populations. The Guidance includes provisions for identifying, tracking and addressing environmental justice matters. Civil Rights Division work includes some cases which have environmental justice implications.

A.3. Provide women with access to savings and credit mechanisms and institutions.

The Department of the Treasury has recently established the Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund. The Fund's programs expand the availability of credit, investment capital, financial and other services in distressed urban and rural communities. It promotes the development of micro-lenders and other financial institutions dedicated to community development through financial support, technical assistance and training. The CDFI Fund is a bipartisan initiative developed as a part of the Community Development and Regulatory Improvement Act of 1994.

MICROENTERPRISE

Self-employment by American women is growing at an unprecedented pace, and women constitute the majority of Americans who gain access to credit through microenterprise lending. Microenterprise programs have been successful in assisting owners of very small businesses, particularly women, to gain their first access to critical resources for improving their lives. The U.S. has taken several key actions to further support self-employment and microenterprise development in our country.

- ◆ **CDFI Programs.** In July, 1996 Treasury Secretary Rubin announced the selection of 32 community development financial institutions to receive \$37.2 million in financial and technical assistance.
- ◆ **Presidential Awards for Excellence in Microenterprise Development.** The Treasury Department, through the CDFI Fund, established the Presidential Awards to honor outstanding practitioners in the microenterprise field. The President presented the first Awards in January 1997 at a White House ceremony.

This program recognizes outstanding efforts to advance the role that microenterprise development plays in enhancing economic opportunities of all Americans, especially those who have lacked access to traditional sources of credit, such as women, low income people, and minorities. The Awards reflect the broad diversity of the field of microenterprise development and will bring wider public attention to the important role and successes of microenterprise development in the domestic economy.

- ❖ **Federal Microenterprise Initiative.** The CDFI Fund will also serve as coordinator of a new initiative to promote coherence among the many microenterprise programs operating across a number of federal agencies. The purpose of this initiative is to help

ensure that federal funding effectively supports the growth and development of the microenterprise field. The initiative will emphasize coordination of program requirements, standardization of data collection and reporting, harmonization of regulations where appropriate, and identification of complementary efforts among programs, such as research and the provision of technical assistance to microenterprise development organizations.

- ❖ **International Microenterprise Initiative.** USAID's Microenterprise Initiative targets \$70 million annually to assist women's microenterprise development. This initiative focuses on building institutions that will provide financial services to poor women. In addition, USAID training and technical assistance in areas such as accessing markets and improving appropriate technology will be made available to women microentrepreneurs. USAID will continue to collaborate with other donors to expand their support for microenterprise development for women. Such work is currently underway through the World Bank's CGAP (Consultative Group on Alleviation of Poverty) and with the Government of Japan under the U.S./Japan Common Agenda.

A.4. Develop gender-based methodologies and conduct research to address the feminization of poverty.

Survey of Income and Program Participation. The Census Bureau's Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) collects gender-specific data on the demographic and economic situation of U.S. households, families, and individuals. SIPP's purposes are to improve the measurement of Americans' economic situation, especially changes over time, and to provide a tool for evaluating the effectiveness of government transfer programs. SIPP provides a broader context for analysis by periodically adding questions on a variety of topics not covered in the core section. Topics include personal history, child care, wealth, child support, disability, school enrollment, taxes, and annual income.

Feminization of Poverty. Many of the Department of Agriculture's economic and program-based research efforts address issues relevant to the feminization of poverty. Current research topics include food security in low-income households, the impact of welfare reform, food spending in female-headed households, and the economic status of rural women. Some research serves as a key input or reference point for programs and policies affecting poor women:

Thrifty Food Plan. The research of USDA economists is being used to revise the Thrifty Food Plan, the low-cost, nutritionally adequate diet plan that is the basis of the food stamp allotment. USDA nutritionists and dietitians will translate the plan into a practical diet for use by food preparers, who are usually women.

The Cost of Raising a Child. USDA research is also used to update *The Cost of Raising a Child*, a report which contributes to ensuring adequate support for the primary caregiver of children as well as providing budgetary guidance in childrearing. This technical report includes

data which are used by approximately half of the states in establishing guidelines for foster care payments. Many states also use this report to set standards for child support awards.

Outside research. USDA also financially supports research by other institutions. USDA is currently sponsoring a study by the Institute for Research on Women examining patterns of Food Stamp use in female-headed households. Six other USDA-funded, university-based studies of poverty issues are currently underway, including research on mother-child interactions in low-income families and economic survival strategies of rural women.

- ❖ **Impact of welfare changes.** The Department of Agriculture will study the impacts of changes in welfare programs on rural households. This study will examine the employment and earnings potential of current rural welfare recipients, taking into account levels of education, labor demands in rural areas, and barriers to participation by rural women's in welfare and work programs such as child care and transportation availability.
- ❖ **Downsizing.** In FY 1997, the Department of Labor Women's Bureau's "Don't Work in the Dark Campaign" will publish a report on downsizing entitled "*Downsized, Rightsized and Outsourced: Meeting the Challenges of Corporate Restructuring.*" The Downsizing report represents the culmination of a variety of research conducted since late summer of 1996. The ramifications of workplace changes from downsizing, business mergers in an internationally competitive environment, and the labor force entrance of former welfare recipients suggest that there are common barriers for women to be or remain fully employed under the circumstances.

STATISTICS

[See F.1. regarding unwaged work, and H.3. regarding gender-disaggregated data.]

B. Education and Training of Women



Platform for Action Strategic Objectives:

- B.1. Ensure equal access to education.
- B.2. Eradicate illiteracy among women.
- B.3. Improve women's access to vocational training, science and technology, and continuing education.
- B.4. Develop non-discriminatory education and training.
- B.5. Allocate sufficient resources for and monitor the implementation of educational reforms.
- B.6. Promote lifelong education and training for girls and women.

B.1. Ensure equal access to education.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX is the principal federal law which prohibits sex discrimination in education programs or activities which receive federal financial assistance. Among other issues, its regulations and policy guidelines address admissions and recruitment, access to course offerings, access to athletic programs, and sexual harassment. Title IX covers all education levels from early childhood to adults. The Department of Education Office for Civil Rights enforces compliance. Over the last few years gender equity issues relating to sexual harassment, non-discriminatory access to athletic programs and opportunities, and testing and assessment practices have received increased attention. In 1996, in response to requests for specific guidance about existing

standards that have guided the enforcement of Title IX in the area of athletics for over a decade, the Office for Civil Rights issued a “Clarification of Intercollegiate Athletics Policy Guidance.” In 1996, the OCR also published policy guidance on sexual harassment by peers and by school employees. In March 1997 OCR issued more comprehensive guidelines addressing sexual harassment of students. Sexual harassment complaints filed with the ED have increased from 40 in 1991 to 152 in 1996. When court actions are necessary, the Department of Education refers a case to the Department of Justice, which represents the ED in court.

The Department of Justice coordinates overall federal government enforcement of Title IX as well as program-specific prohibitions against sex discrimination.

- ❖ The DOJ will do in-depth reviews of selected federal grant-making agencies to aid in identifying the best methods to enforce Title IX and program-specific prohibitions against sex discrimination. DOJ will conduct training programs for federal agency personnel concerning Title IX requirements and other statutes prohibiting sex discrimination by recipients of federal financial assistance.

Women’s Educational Equity Act. The WEEA promotes gender equity in education for girls and women who suffer from multiple forms of discrimination. The WEEA Program awards grants and contracts to public and non-profit organizations, groups and individuals to develop interventions to provide equity in education for girls and women; to help education institutions meet the requirements of Title IX; and to help women and girls who suffer from multiple forms of discrimination. Since 1974, support for the WEEA program has totaled over \$100 million, but funding has varied over the years.

WEEA Equity Resource Center. This national resource center on gender equity products provides information and assistance to educators through: its toll-free telephone numbers (800-793-5076 for publications, 800-225-3088 for general information; its World Wide Web site: <http://www.edc.org/CEEC/WEEA>; its electronic forum or listserv called Edequity.

The WEEA Resource Center also manages the activities of the Gender Equity Expert Panel which is identifying and sharing promising and exemplary programs and products which have evidence that they increase gender equity in and through education.

Titles IV and VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Under Titles IV and VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Department of Justice has prosecuted numerous cases to obtain greater educational opportunities for affected students, male and female, to elementary, secondary, and higher education. The Department of Justice continues to litigate a large number of cases challenging practices of school districts which results in illegal student segregation and denial of equal educational opportunities.

- ◆ **Admissions.** The Department of Justice successfully challenged the male-only admissions policy of Virginia Military Institute (VMI) and the Citadel (the Military College of South Carolina), two public universities which continued to deny women the unique educational opportunities and benefits available at the schools. In *United States v Commonwealth of Virginia (VMI)*, the DOJ Civil Rights Division contended that the

Commonwealth of Virginia's exclusion of women from the Virginia Military Institute violated the Equal Protection Clause and that the remedy of providing women a separate program at a private women's college did not cure the violation. The lawsuits recently ended long-standing policies which prohibited the admission and enrollment of qualified female students at state publicly-supported higher education institutions.

The DOJ also investigated complaints of sexual harassment and restriction of female cadets to certain units in the Corps of Cadets at Texas A & M University, a public institution of higher learning. After DOJ's investigation, Texas A & M entered into a monitoring agreement with the United States Government requiring action to ensure that harassment would cease and female Cadets would be eligible for membership in all units of the Corps.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Under the ADA, the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division Disability Rights Section has successfully resolved several complaints alleging discrimination by day care providers. For example, in Sunshine Child Center, Gillette, Wisconsin, the Department of Justice entered into a settlement agreement resolving a complaint filed by the mother of a girl with cerebral palsy against the Sunshine Child Center ending discriminatory practices and improving access to education for this disabled child.

FINANCIAL ACCESS

The U.S. provides universal free public education for kindergarten through high school. However less than 10% of the funding typically comes from the federal government. School attendance and graduation rates through grade 12 are about equal for males and females. To help make it feasible for all who want and are able to attend postsecondary institutions, the Department of Education provides billions of dollars in student financial aid in the form of grants, loans, and work-study opportunities to ensure access to postsecondary education. Information on obtaining this financial aid is available through the ED's World Wide Web site and its publications, "Student Guide" to financial aid, and "Higher Education Opportunities for Minorities and Women," which include information on non-traditional studies.

Student Loan Reform Act of 1994. This lowers interest rates for students and allows for flexible income contingent repayment plans.

Higher Education Act. In 1976, this was amended to provide grants to institutions of higher education for fellowships to qualified needy members of groups under-represented in such graduate and professional study areas as science, engineering and international affairs. More than half of these grants have been awarded to women since the program's inception.

Federal Adult Education Act. This was amended in 1978 to provide means to enable all adults to acquire the basic skills necessary to function in society, and to enable adults who so desire to continue their education through completion of secondary school. Since 1975, the majority of participants in this program have been women.

ACCESS FOR AT-RISK GIRLS AND WOMEN

The Department of Education is committed to increasing the percentage of girls and women who enroll in and successfully complete education programs including programs to give them workplace skills; to decreasing the percentage of girls dropping out of high school; and to decreasing the dropout rate of pregnant and parenting secondary education students.

The ED has supported the development and dissemination of a variety of model programs designed to help women and girls at risk of failure in school and society, including guides for single mothers and programs for incarcerated women:

- TRIO programs (educational opportunity programs designed to motivate and support students from disadvantaged backgrounds) provide forms of financial assistance developed specifically for individuals who, for a variety of reasons, would not otherwise attend college. Many TRIO programs have been credited with helping women with unexpected life challenges advance their education.
- A special education grant has been funded to develop and implement effective models in higher education for encouraging recruitment and retention of women with disabilities.
- Some of the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education's (FIPSE) projects address the needs of at-risk women at colleges and universities through mentoring and other special programs. (FIPSE awards grants to assist education institutions and agencies in improving postsecondary education opportunities.)
- The ED supports a multi-year study on teen pregnancy.

FUTURE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION INITIATIVES FOR AT-RISK WOMEN AND GIRLS

- ❖ **Education and career awareness programs and opportunities.** ED, in collaboration with state and other federal agencies, will promote programs and activities providing at-risk girls and women with educational opportunities and services. Included will be programs to help students complete high school, prepare for high school equivalency examinations, and pursue postsecondary education, as well as to provide adult basic education and workplace skills (including vocational and skills training to gain or upgrade employment, training to prepare students for licensure requirements, and training for business and technology jobs). The ED will encourage educational institutions and communities to increase educational opportunities and expand career awareness programs targeting at-risk girls and women, specifically to provide program information and access to job opportunities offered through schools.
- ❖ **Counseling and advising programs.** ED will encourage schools to make available a variety of programs, activities and information (including counseling and advising programs for students) to address the needs of at-risk girls and women, including prevention and treatment of alcohol and substance abuse, dealing with peer pressure, building self-esteem, and avoiding or responding to teen pregnancy. The ED will

encourage prevention, early intervention, and incentive programs that promote student retention, including activities fostering students reenrolling in school.

- ❖ **Mentoring.** ED will encourage educational institutions and communities to evaluate the need for, and, based on identified needs, establish appropriate mentoring programs such as peer mentoring as well as adult role models/mentors for girls and young women in career tracks or at risk of failure in school.
- ❖ **Reducing teen pregnancy and high school dropout rates.** In collaboration with other federal agencies, ED will encourage schools to address pregnancy prevention in a serious and meaningful way, showing boys and girls how pregnancy and teen parenthood may limit future opportunities. The ED will also encourage educational institutions to take steps to increase high school completion rates for pregnant teens and teen parents by eliminating remaining barriers to their continued participation in school programs and activities.

The Department of Agriculture is involved in cooperative efforts with schools to establish child care centers and parenting education programs for young mothers to facilitate and encourage completion of high school.

- ❖ **Bilingual Education.** The Department of Agriculture will develop bilingual education programs (featuring the blending of employment and family life as a centerpiece) for immigrant and binational women and parenting teens, possibly in conjunction with other federal agencies.

ACCESS FOR GIRLS GLOBALLY

- ◆ The Agency for International Development (USAID) Girls' and Women's Education Initiative is being implemented worldwide with the goal of achieving a significant increase in girls' primary and/or secondary school completion and a significant improvement in female literacy rates. Targeted countries include Bolivia, Egypt, Morocco, Guinea, Mali, Ethiopia, Nepal, India, Cambodia, Guatemala, and Honduras. Ongoing girls' education activities are underscored in many other USAID-Mission countries, such as Malawi and Uganda. USAID will continue to coordinate with other donors to ensure the maximum impact of this initiative through complementarity with other donor programs.

B.2. Eradicate illiteracy among women.

Adult Education Act. The Act was amended in 1978 to provide means to enable all adults to acquire the basic skills necessary to function in society, and to enable adults who so desire to continue their education through completion of secondary school. Since 1975, the majority of participants in this program have been women. The Act was further amended in 1991 by the National Literacy Act.

Adult Education for Limited English Proficient Adults. Adults and out-of-school youth 16 years of age or older who have limited ability in speaking, reading, writing or understanding English or whose native language is not English are eligible for adult education services. In 1995 more than 3.8 million adults were served in the Federal Adult Education Program. Immigrants represent the largest group served in the Program. Enrollment in English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs increased from 396,000 in 1980 to over 1.4 million in 1995.

Goals 2000. At the 1989 Education Summit convened by President Bush and the nation's governors, National Education Goals were created to provide a national framework and give states and communities flexibility to design their own strategies to achieve them. One of the goals states, "By the year 2000....Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship." Subsequently, "Goals 2000. Educate America Act" of 1994, amended in 1996, provides grants to help states and communities develop and implement their own education reforms. No new regulations have been issued and states and local school districts can use the funds for a wide range of activities that fit within their own approaches to helping students reach higher standards.

America Reads Challenge. In August 1996 President Clinton called on all Americans to join in this initiative. Working with parents and educators, the efforts of the whole society — schools, libraries, religious institutions, universities, college students, the media, community and national groups, cultural organizations, business leaders and senior citizens — would ensure that every child can read well and independently by the end of the third grade. The initiative will draw upon existing resources such as AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve, the Senior Corps, and other community service and community based organizations throughout America as well as promote the involvement of 100,000 college work-study students.

- ❖ In addition, proposed legislation would provide \$2.75 billion to fund the following over a period of five years:

America's Reading Corps. New education investments will provide after-school reading specialists to train the tutors and provide supervision. Funds from the National Service budget will help recruit and organize the tutors. The goal is to provide 30,000 reading specialists and coordinators to help mobilize 1 million tutors.

Parents as First Teachers Challenge Grants. National and regional groups, as well as local communities and organizations, would be eligible for \$300 million in grants for programs to provide assistance for interested parents to help their children become successful readers by the end of the third grade.

Head Start Expansion. One million 3- and 4-year olds would be reached through the expansion of Head Start Programs.

Title I/Even Start. Additional investments would be made to expand efforts to strengthen teaching and learning during the regular school day.

Challenge to Private Sector to Work with Schools and Libraries. Parents and private and non-profit groups will be actively encouraged to be a part of the America Reads Challenge initiative as they currently are in the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education and the summer READ*WRITE*NOW initiative. (Partnership for Family Involvement in Education promotes children's learning through bringing together employers, religious groups, community organizations, families and schools to support student learning to high standards. READ*WRITE*NOW encourages children's reading and writing with a reading partner 30 minutes a day.)

[See B.1 above for the Agency for International Development's Girls' and Women's Education Initiative.]

B.3. Improve women's access to vocational training, science and technology, and continuing education.

The Department of Education is committed to increasing the percent of women who pursue postsecondary study in fields in which women are traditionally underrepresented such as engineering, the physical sciences, computer sciences, and the technical trades. It seeks to encourage girls and women to use technology to achieve new levels of learning and to get new information age skills and abilities.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Department of Education's actions include:

- **The Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE).** Through FIPSE, ED identifies and funds promising projects that seek to improve postsecondary educational opportunities. Among the projects funded are several designed to encourage and support women in postsecondary science, mathematics, engineering, and technology studies. FIPSE disseminates information about exemplary projects and publishes them in books entitled Lessons Learned.
- **Grants.** Recent ED grants have been awarded which focus on gender equity in math, sciences and technology. National and state Eisenhower program grants and technical assistance consortia have also supported work to address gender inequities in mathematics and science education, and they have created an Internet listserv to share policies and practices to promote equity.
- **Fellowships.** The Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need program (GANN) helps both women and men in their study of mathematics, science, and technology. GANN provides fellowships to graduate students of superior ability in areas of national need through grants to institutions of higher education. Fellowships are awarded in areas such as chemistry, engineering, mathematics, physics, biology, and computer and information sciences.

- **Supplemental Instruction.** The TRIO programs, which provide support for at-risk youth, include the Upward Bound Math/Science Initiative. This program provides supplemental academic instruction in math and science to both boys and girls at the high school level and encourages them to pursue and complete postsecondary education.
- **Civil Rights Enforcement.** The ED will continue to build on the proactive docket of civil rights enforcement activities aimed at eliminating gender discrimination which denies access to challenging courses, especially in the fields of math, science, and technology.
- ◆ Since 1995, the ED has been working with the National Science Foundation and others to develop equity guidelines to increase participation of women and other groups underrepresented in math and science. The National Science Foundation's Program for Women and Girls in Science, Engineering and Mathematics supports Implementation and Development Projects and Information Dissemination Activities in this area through its Directorate for Education and Human Resources. For more information check: <http://128.150.60.12.80/ehr/herd/women/general.html>
- ◆ In March 1996, the ED hosted a roundtable meeting with governmental and non-governmental organizations, educators, and student leaders to discuss strategies to increase the participation of women and girls in mathematics, science, and technology.

NEW DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION INITIATIVES

- ❖ **Promotion and outreach.** By emphasizing in speeches and other communications the importance of mathematics, science, and technology as preparation for the broadest range of career choices and for functioning intelligently in society, the ED's senior officers and employees will encourage girls and women to develop and retain interest in mathematics and science. The ED will encourage school districts to expand career awareness programs for elementary students that expose female students to engineering, scientific, and technical careers. The ED will also encourage businesses to expand youth apprenticeships and internships and will ask both schools and businesses to review their recruitment and retention practices to ensure they are targeting girls and women.
- ❖ **Identify and disseminate information.** In collaboration with experts and stakeholders (e.g., through the Mathematics, Science and Technology Subpanel of the Gender Equity Expert Panel and with the help of mathematics and science clearinghouses and consortia), the ED will identify, compile and disseminate information on promising and exemplary products, programs, and practices to increase gender equity in mathematics, science, and technology for learners at all age levels.
- ❖ **Grants.** The ED will fund projects that develop or identify model initiatives that engage women and girls in education in interdisciplinary, technology-based learning and in

programs and activities that equip them with technology literacy and skills, including how to use computers and networks to access information and skills for technology-based careers.

- ❖ **Access to scholarships and other financial aid.** Working with other stakeholders, the ED will encourage activities to increase access to scholarships and other financial aid for women and girls to pursue postsecondary study in fields such as engineering, the physical sciences, computer sciences, the technical trades, and other areas in which women are traditionally underrepresented. The ED will publicize the availability of scholarships to study mathematics, science, and engineering, focusing on awareness of these opportunities among girls and young women.

VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL TRAINING

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1993. This provides grants to states to create programs that integrate school learning and work-based learning. It is designed to move young women and men who are not immediately going on to college from the classroom into apprenticeships and jobs with a future.

School-to-Work is jointly administered by the Departments of Education and Labor. It links education reform with workforce and economic development by engaging many stakeholders in the design and implementation of a comprehensive, integrated system of education and workforce preparation reflecting local needs. It prepares them for high-skill careers and further training or education and gives them confidence that they have the skills to succeed. Funding, channeled through ED and DOL, for states and communities was \$100 million in FY 1994, \$245 million in FY 1995 and \$35 million in FY 1996.

ED has funded school-to-work grants to increase opportunities for women in non-traditional careers through work-based mentoring and job shadowing, and to develop and disseminate a coherent professional development program to help schools and communities implement the equity provisions of the School-to-Work Opportunities Act and Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972.

The Perkins Act of 1992. This authorizes the use of a certain amount of the states' federal vocational education funds for single parents, displaced homemakers and single pregnant women to help them continue their education. It also requires states to appoint a sex equity coordinator to oversee gender equity in vocational education programs.

- ◆ **Outreach to the states.** In May 1996, ED representatives met with state sex-equity coordinators. Sex equity coordinators shared best practices and strategies to ensure that practices promoting gender equity are included in school-to-work and other vocational education initiatives.

NEW DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION INITIATIVES

- ❖ **Increased awareness of and participation in non-traditional occupations.** The ED will encourage educational institutions to take steps to ensure that girls and women are

aware of opportunities in non-traditional fields and technical trades with access to career clusters, on-site job shadowing, apprenticeships, and internships providing substantive exploration of talent and development of skills. The ED along with other agencies will develop and disseminate guidance for school-to-work, Tech Prep, preparation training for technology, and vocational education grantees. The guidance is to ensure that programs for girls and women meet high academic standards integrated with industry and recognized skill standards and focus on increasing the participation of women and girls in non-traditional and emerging fields of study. The ED will also make available information on how to obtain financial aid, including scholarships.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES

Access to higher education in agricultural fields is a critical step to increasing representation of women in agricultural policy and management positions and integrating gender perspectives in farm legislation and public policies and programs. Department of Agriculture (USDA) activities are as follows:

- **National Needs Graduate Fellowships Grants Program.** This enables colleges and universities to recruit outstanding pre-doctoral students into areas of the food and agricultural sciences having critical shortages of expertise. Women have made up over one-third of the approximately 800 fellows since 1984. Fellowships Program support will continue.
- **Gender-based data.** USDA maintains gender-based data on annual enrollments and degrees earned in the food and agricultural sciences to evaluate progress in women's representation in these fields. Annual data collection will continue.

NEW USDA INITIATIVES

- ❖ **Needs Assessment.** Use enrollment and degree data to assess critical shortages of expertise and design grant and academic programs to increase enrollments in those areas.
- ❖ **Promotion and Outreach.** Increase efforts to interest women in the agricultural sciences by holding forums for students and visiting schools to speak to and provide agricultural science career role models for young women. Within educational institutions, promote women's interests in non-traditional careers in agricultural sciences and related fields.

For example, USDA's "Ag in the Classroom" program, designed to increase agricultural literacy among schoolchildren, provides an excellent opportunity to highlight women's roles and opportunities in agricultural fields. "Ag in the Classroom" currently reaches over 4.1 million students in all 50 states. The program delivers information about agriculture to teachers and students in a variety of ways, including through classroom volunteers, instructional materials, and field trips.

- ❖ **Fellowships.** Increase participation of women in the USDA Cochran fellowship program, which provides training opportunities in the U.S. for agriculturists from

middle-income countries and emerging democracies. These fellowships are available to persons in the public or private sectors who are involved with agricultural trade, agribusiness development, management, policy or marketing.

OTHER GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

- ❖ **Science Literacy.** The Department of the Interior's Women's Council has established a pilot project for elementary and secondary school students aimed at science literacy and natural resource management careers. The project will attach an educational component to existing initiatives, with specifics set by local program managers, schools and communities.
- ◆ The Department of Defense has expanded opportunities for women in pilot training. In 1993, assignment to combat aviation was opened to women. Currently, the Services have 189 women pilots and navigators flying combat aircraft and another 169 in training. The Department's policy is proceeding in three phases — first, a focus on aviation, then assignment to naval combatants, and finally, ground assignments.

[See F.5 below for the DOL Women's Bureau's Working Women Count Honor Roll component, "Respect and Opportunity on the Job.")

B.4. Develop non-discriminatory education and training.

PROMOTING GENDER EQUITY

The Department of Education is committed to providing leadership in conducting and supporting research on gender equity. It promotes educational equity for women and girls by creating an equitable educational environment for both female and male educators and their students.

In 1995, the ED created the position of Special Assistant for Gender Equity. This person is responsible for promoting, coordinating, and evaluating gender equity programs. (See www.ed.gov/offices/ODS/equity.html)

Recent ED grants support the training of teachers in gender-sensitive methodology and instructional strategies that take advantage of the differences in perception, motivation, and cultural styles of female and male students. Other grants have supported research on gender-based inequities in classroom interactions, and the production of teacher inservice and preservice materials and the training of educational administrators in promoting gender equity.

Results of ED supported research have been distributed through the national media as well as in teacher and community education efforts such as information digests, satellite town meetings, activities of the WEEA Equity Resource Center, other technical assistance centers and via reports prepared by organizations concerned with women's issues.

Other resources are available from the WEEA Equity Resource Center; the Multi-state Desegregation Assistance Centers; and through other ED information services such as the 800-USA-LEARN staff, the National Library of Education's 800-424-1616 service and the Department's World Wide Web page: www.ed.gov/

- ◆ **Town Hall Meeting.** In July 1996, the ED sponsored a National Town Hall meeting with satellite down-links throughout the country. This live interactive teleconference about educational programs and community efforts to improve gender equity in education, entitled "Women and Girls in Education: What's Working in Schools and Communities," addressed mathematics, science and technology and leadership for women and girls.
- ◆ **Resource List.** The Department has compiled and disseminated information and a resource list on programs, products and research dealing with gender equity to callers from the National Town Hall meeting. The resource list has also been made available through the Deputy Secretary's Office link at the World Wide Web site at <http://www.ed.gov/>
- ◆ **Gender Equity Expert Panel.** In April 1996, the ED approved members of the Gender Equity Expert Panel, one part of a proposed system of expert panels being developed under the Educational Research, Development, and Dissemination Act of 1994. The panel will review programs and designate as "exemplary" or "promising" those programs that best accomplish the goal of advancing gender equity. The panel's recommendations for improvement, along with summary information on the programs recommended, will be forwarded to the Secretary of Education for approval and then will be publicized to help potential users obtain information on a variety of promising and exemplary programs. Feedback, including suggestions for improvement, on programs reviewed will be shared with the submitters.
- ❖ **Research on gender equity.** The ED will continue to learn more about the nature and causes of gender inequities, as well as the research-based principles to diminish them in and through education. For example, ED will support research that investigates the patterns of gender distribution in special education and ways to decrease sex bias in tests. ED also will continue to expand research on alternative school structures and their relationship to student achievement with a goal of optimizing the public educational setting by offering alternatives of what works best for student achievement.

Gender-based Data. The National Center for Education Statistics collects and reports its information by sex and race. It has also developed some specific publications which address women such as: "Findings from the Condition of Education 1995: The Educational Progress of Women (NCES 96-768) and "Women: Education and Outcomes" (NCES 96-061). See www.ed.gov/NCES/

- ❖ **Training for educators.** The ED will support the creation and strengthening of gender-fair curricula materials and teaching techniques. ED will continue to make available information on research findings regarding gender equitable classroom practices, gender-fair instructional techniques, and best practices, model programs and materials

to promote gender equity. ED also will encourage educators to develop a system to share this information with teacher education programs and practicing teachers to alert them to bias in their interactions and to help them develop skills to ensure a greater degree of equity including gender-fair teaching techniques. In addition to the WEEA Equity Resource Center and the Gender Equity Expert Panel Subpanel on Teacher Education and Professional Development, the Multi-state Desegregation Assistance Centers funded by Title IV of the Civil Rights Act help K-12 educators achieve equity related to gender, race and national origin issues.

THE U.S. ARMED FORCES

With the repeal of the combat exclusion law, a 1994 Secretary of Defense memorandum opened many non-traditional career fields in the Armed Forces to women. Training leading to these fields is now open to women. Each Military Department provides high school students with opportunities to receive leadership and job skills training along with their normal academic education. About 300,000 students are enrolled in these programs, half of them females.

FBI AGENTS

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has begun to promote the recruitment of women as Special Agents, support personnel, and participants in the Honors Internship Program by placing women on the covers of FBI brochures and publications and depicting them as role models.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

SEX DISCRIMINATION LAW

The Department of Justice (DOJ) Civil Rights Division has participated in appellate and Supreme Court cases involving discrimination against females in education at all levels — in primary and secondary schools as well as colleges.

- ◆ For example, in February 1996, the DOJ filed an amicus brief supporting the plaintiff in the Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit in *Davis v Monroe County Board of Education*. The resulting decision held (consistent with the position of the Department) that Title IX requires school officials to address student-on-student sexual harassment once they know about it, making them responsible for ensuring that the federally-supported educational program is not affected by sexual harassment.
- ◆ In January 1996, the DOJ filed a brief supporting the plaintiffs-appellees in the Court of Appeals for the First Circuit in *Cohen v Brown University*. The district court concluded that, under the Department of Education's regulation and policy interpretation, Brown University did not effectively accommodate the athletic interests and abilities of female and male students, and thus violated Title IX.

The Department of Justice Civil Rights Division ensures that all federal agencies providing financial grants enforce Title IX's prohibition against sex discrimination by federally-assisted education programs and activities.

- ❖ Future plans: The Department plans to conduct periodic training programs for federal agencies which provide financial assistance concerning the requirements of Title IX and continue its enforcement efforts under Title IX.

INSTITUTIONALIZED PERSONS

Through the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act of 1980, the Department of Justice has standing to enforce the federal constitutional and statutory rights of persons confined in public institutions, such as facilities for the mentally disabled, elderly persons, juveniles, and both persons accused of and convicted of criminal activities (jails and prisons). Most of these activities have improved protections for the rights of women.

Through litigation, consent decrees, and voluntary correction of deficient conditions and practices implicating the federal rights of institutionalized persons, the Department has sought and secured training and treatment as a part of constitutionally mandated habilitation and treatment for mentally disabled persons.

The DOJ enforces the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to ensure that school aged children with mental and physical disabilities have the right to a free, appropriate public school education in the least restrictive setting necessary to ensure their adequate education.

B.5. Allocate sufficient resources for and monitor the implementation of educational reforms.

PROVIDING FOR CHILDREN OF U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) supports the educational needs of children of American military personnel worldwide. DoDEA is transforming its schools into a model of the 21st Century school in support of the National Education Goals. Emphasis on providing opportunities for the girl child to excel in mathematics, science, and non-traditional subjects is an integral part of the program.

B.6. Promote lifelong education and training for girls and women.

[See the discussion under B.1., as well as the Working Women Count Honor Roll under Strategic Objective F.5 below, and Girl Power under L.1.]

Military Spouses. The Defense Department now has legislative authority to provide continuing education benefits to spouses of military members. The effect of the legislation is to permit the spouses of military personnel stationed overseas to participate in basic skills programs supported by appropriated funds.

Female Offenders. The Department of Justice Bureau of Prisons provides educational and vocational training programs designed to equip female offenders with the knowledge and skills necessary to compete effectively in the U.S. job market. On May 1, 1996, out of a total of 6,400 female inmates in BOP custody, some 2,570 were participating in BOP educational programs, and 540 were participating in vocational training programs.

C. Women and Health



Platform for Action Strategic Objectives:

- C.1. Increase women's access throughout the life cycle to appropriate, affordable and quality health care, information and related services.
- C.2. Strengthen preventive programs that promote women's health.
- C.3. Undertake gender-sensitive initiatives that address sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health issues.
- C.4. Promote research and disseminate information on women's health.
- C.5. Increase resources and monitor follow-up for women's health.

C.1. Increase women's access throughout the life cycle to appropriate, affordable and quality health care, information and related services.

ACCESS TO CARE

CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE IN WOMEN'S HEALTH

- ❖ Six National Centers of Excellence in Women's Health provide state-of-the-art comprehensive and integrated health care services, multidisciplinary research and public and health care professional education targeted toward the special needs of women. Developed and supported by the Public Health Service's Office of Women's Health, the Centers will serve as national models that can be evaluated and duplicated across the country. New Centers will be established and supported over the coming year.

MEDICAID

The federal Medicaid law (Title XIX of the Social Security Act) authorizes federal matching funds to assist the states in providing health care for certain low-income persons. The states have considerable flexibility in structuring their programs, and there are substantial variations from state to state.

Approximately 37 million persons are receiving health care in 1997 from the various state Medicaid programs. The major groups that states are required to cover include but are not limited to:

Low-income families with dependent children and whose family income resources are below standards set by states.

The aged, blind, and disabled receiving cash assistance from the federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program or eligible for Medicaid under more restrictive state criteria. Pregnant women and children up to age 6 whose family income does not exceed a certain standard.

On average, federal funds account for approximately 57% of the cost of the Medicaid program. For the 1997 fiscal year, the federal share of Medicaid expenditures is estimated at \$98.5 billion. State spending on Medicaid in FY 1997 is estimated at \$74.3 billion. Total Medicaid expenditures in FY 1997, including state administrative costs, are estimated at \$173 billion.

In the past, families who received Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) cash assistance were automatically eligible for Medicaid. The Welfare Reform Act of 1996 eliminated the AFDC program and replaced it with a block grant program for temporary assistance for needy families (TANF). Receipt of cash assistance under TANF does not entitle the family to Medicaid. However, under welfare reform, a new Medicaid eligibility program was established with eligibility requirements linked to the old AFDC program as it existed prior to the enactment of Welfare Reform on July 16, 1996.

MEDICARE

Medicare is a nationwide, federally administered health insurance program authorized in 1965 to cover the cost of hospitalization, medical care, and some related services for most people over age 65. In 1972, coverage was extended to people receiving Social Security Disability Insurance for 2 years and people with end-stage renal failure.

Medicare Part A, or the Hospital Insurance (HI) program, helps pay for hospital, home health, skilled nursing facility, and hospice care for the aged and disabled. In 1996, the HI program provided protection against the costs of hospital and other medical care to over 38 million people (33 million aged and 5 million disabled persons). Approximately 22% of these individuals received medical services covered by HI during the year and total HI benefits on their behalf amounted to \$123.9 billion.

Medicare Part B, or the Supplementary Medical Insurance Program, (SMI) pays for physician, outpatient, and other services for the aged and disabled. In 1996, the SMI program provided protection against the costs of physician and other medical services to nearly 36 million people, (32 million aged and 4 million disabled persons). Approximately 84% of these individuals received medical services covered by SMI during the year and total SMI benefits on their behalf amounted to \$67.1 billion.

CANCER SCREENING AND TREATMENT

Mammography Quality Standards. In October 1994, the Food and Drug Administration, part of the Department of Health and Human Services, implemented a program to ensure that mammography facilities in the U.S. meet standards for equipment, personnel, record keeping, and quality control. The standards also require that facilities be inspected annually. Women can look for the FDA certificate as evidence that the facility meets quality standards, and can call 1-800-4-CANCER to find a certified mammography facility.

HHS MAMMOGRAPHY PROJECTS

- Screening campaigns.
- Educational materials.
- Implementation of the Mammography Quality Standards Act.
- Certification procedures (now in place) insuring that every woman receives the highest quality mammogram.

Promoting Mammography for Older Women. In May 1995, the First Lady and HHS initiated a campaign to educate women over 65 that mammography saves lives. Early detection decreases breast cancer rates by 30% in this age group. Screening mammography has been covered by Medicare on a biennial basis for the past several years, though the benefit has not been widely used. The campaign educates older women to use their Medicare mammography benefit.

Cancer Screening for Low-income Women. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program offers free or low-cost mammography screening to low-income elderly, minority, and American Indian/Alaska Native women. By the end of this year, the program will be fully operating in all 50 states. The goal is to reduce breast cancer deaths among these women by 30 percent, and cervical cancer deaths by more than 90 percent, through increased mammographies and Pap testing.

Programs to Encourage Women to Become More Involved in Their Own Health Management. Other programs are designed to encourage women to become more involved in their own health management by recognizing the need for routine cancer screening and testing procedures.

- Community projects are encouraged through "witness programs" where breast cancer survivors share their cancer experiences.

- Culturally sensitive activities are underway to determine specific approaches to benefit minority communities. Mammogram mobile units are increasing the number of women being screened for breast cancer. For example, the addition of women's clinics and female providers has increased the number of older American Indian women screened for breast and cervical cancers. Brochures encouraging women to get Pap smears and mammograms have been translated into seven Asian-Pacific languages. Other projects are based in African-American churches to teach women about cancer screening.

Treatments for Breast Cancer in the Elderly. The Agency for Health Care Policy and Research is conducting a 5-year study to identify the determinants of, and calculate the cost-effectiveness ratios for, three alternative treatments for local breast cancer in the elderly: modified radical mastectomy, breast conserving surgery with radiotherapy, and breast conserving surgery without radiotherapy.

Chronic Disease Screening Programs. An HHS program aims at improving the health of low-income and minority women by integrating chronic disease screening programs. The objective of this project is to implement low-cost behavioral interventions to ensure access to clinical services related to lifestyle issues in diabetes management in minority women, aged 40 and older, with non-insulin-dependent diabetes. Interventions should build on previous work of a research team.

OLDER WOMEN

Initiative on Older Women. Launched in 1994 by HHS's Administration on Aging, the initiative is creating partnerships designed to address the needs of older women; addressing women's capacity to contribute significantly to society throughout their lives; and establishing an Older Women's Policy and Resource Center to educate women at the grassroots level about issues such as income security, health, housing, domestic violence, and caregiving and the importance of addressing these concerns.

Study of Women's Health Across the Nation (SWAN). Now in its second year, this seven-site study generates collaborative epidemiologic studies characterizing the biological and psychosocial conditions preceding and following the menopausal transition and the effect of this transition on subsequent health and risk factors for age-related disease. Each site will study Caucasian women and bi-ethnic populations, with four sites targeting African-Americans, and three targeting Japanese-, Chinese- and Hispanic-Americans. Current plans call for the recruitment of over 3,700 mid-life women, at least half of whom will be minorities. HHS sponsors research, education and regulatory programs on diseases of older women, fostering public-private partnerships.

- **Osteoporosis.** There are specific programs on educating providers on interventions to prevent osteoporosis, facilitating the development, review and approval of new drugs for treatment, and devices for bone density screening.

- **Reproductive and Urinary Tract Systems.** HHS has an effort to increase knowledge among providers and the public regarding treatment of urinary incontinence.

MENTAL ILLNESS AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the Public Health Service (part of the Department of Health and Human Services) supports demonstration programs for residential substance abuse treatment for pregnant women and women with dependent children.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Provision of Services. HHS directly supports the provision of reproductive health and family planning services through the Title X (of the Public Service Health Act) Family Planning program. Each year, nearly 5 million persons receive Title X-supported services, 85% of them from low-income households. In additions, other programs such as Medicaid, Maternal and Child Health, and Social Service Block Grants provide some reproductive and family planning services.

Improved Access to Information. The federal government took steps in 1994 to ensure that all women cared for through federal family planning programs have access to uncensored information, including pregnancy option counseling when requested, by lifting the “Gag Rule.”

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

- ❖ **Federal Employee Health Insurance.** The Office of Personnel Management has as a goal increasing opportunities for federal government employees to enroll or change enrollment in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program. Opportunities to enroll or change enrollment to accommodate changes in family makeup have historically been limited. Because family and workplace circumstances have changed greatly over the years, in July 1996 OPM published a proposed regulation that would, among other things, make it easier for employees to provide coverage for their children by expanding opportunities to change enrollment based on change in family status (e.g., a child born out of wedlock), not just marital status (e.g., marriage or divorce). OPM expects to finalize these regulations by the summer of 1997.

Mammograms and Pap Smears. The Office of Personnel Management has in recent years required health plans that participate in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program to provide coverage for mammograms and Pap smears used for the early detection of cancer in women. In 1994 OPM mandated coverage of autologous bone marrow transplants, a procedure which is considered valuable in certain kinds of cancer, including breast cancer.

Maternity Hospital Stay. Beginning with the 1998 contract year, mothers covered by a Federal Employees Health Benefits plan will have the option of remaining in the hospital for at least 48 hours after a regular delivery and 96 hours after a Caesarean delivery.

Mastectomy Admission and Length of Stay. Beginning with the 1998 contract year, all Federal Employees Health Benefits plans must provide a mastectomy patient with the option of having the procedure performed on an inpatient basis and remaining in the hospital for at least 48 hours after the procedure.

WOMEN VETERANS

The estimated population of women veterans in 1994 was 1.2 million, or about 4.5% of the total veteran population. Currently, women make up 11.6% of the active duty military force and 13% of the reserve force. With growing representation in the military services, Congress authorized, in the Veterans Health Care Act of 1992, new and expanded services for women veterans. In 1994, the VA published its policy on the Women's Veterans Health Program, emphasizing equal access to care and adequate privacy in VA facilities.

The Women Veterans Health Program. While supporting the overall mission of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and in collaboration with the VA's Center for Women Veterans, the Women Veterans Health Program specifically addresses the unique health care needs of women veterans. Programs include:

- Priority outpatient counseling and treatment for sexual trauma.
- Specific health services for women such as Pap smears, mammography, and general reproductive health care.
- Diagnosis and treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder.
- Full time women veterans coordinators.
- In 1995, the program was given Special Emphasis Program status within the Veterans Health Administration.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND RELATED SERVICES

- ❖ **National Women's Health Information Center.** HHS and DOD are establishing a comprehensive resource clearinghouse to provide the public, health care professionals, and researchers with state-of-the-art federal and private sector information about women's health via a toll-free telephone number and the Internet.
- ❖ **Healthy Women 2000 Initiative.** The Office of Women's Health has created a Healthy Women 2000 initiative, a comprehensive federal health education series that provides a forum for policymakers and representatives of consumer and health care professional organizations about critical women's health issues, including domestic violence and reproductive health issues. Now in its second year, conferences in 1997 are planned for Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles. [For more information, see H.2.]
- ❖ **National Minority Women's Health Conference.** "Bridging the Gap: Enhancing Partnerships to Improve Minority Women's Health," a major national health conference was convened by HHS in January, 1997 in Washington, D.C. to focus critical attention on special

health issues affecting women of color and to develop partnerships to improve the health of minority women. The conference provided a national forum to (1) present information on the status of minority women's health; (2) discuss innovative partnership models from the academic, business, professional and community sectors, and the federal, state, and local governments that target minority women; (3) conduct skills-building workshops for partnership programs; and (4) discuss strategies for key stakeholders to improve minority women's health.

Reproductive Health Education Activities. HHS has a variety of other "health education" activities that provide consumers, health care providers, and others with information on such topics as family planning and teen pregnancy prevention; responsible use of contraception, including protecting oneself against STDs and HIV; the impact of substance use during pregnancy and effective strategies to prevent and treat substance abuse among pregnant women.

Young Women's Health Promotion Program. Get Real: Straight Talk on Women's Health is a video kit that was developed in collaboration with the Society for the Advancement of Women's Health Research. The video kit, which includes a facilitator's guide, is designed as a health promotion program for women between the ages of 18 and 24. Focusing on this age group provides an important opportunity for education about not only the immediate health issues for young women (e.g. HIV/AIDS and other STDs, contraception, alcohol and substance abuse, smoking, eating disorders, and violence) but also the diseases that may strike later in life including breast cancer, osteoporosis, and heart disease. The video kit provides relevant health information and encourages young women to practice healthier behaviors (e.g. appropriate nutrition and exercise, safe sex or abstinence, not smoking) in order to prevent or lower their risk for developing these diseases and other health problems. The video and facilitator's guide are being distributed widely across U.S. college campuses.

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information. The Clearinghouse, which is funded through SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, designs, implements, and evaluates innovative knowledge transfer and communication strategies. It is the central national resource for the latest information on all aspects of substance abuse, answering millions of inquiries annually. The Clearinghouse distributes all of SAMSHA's major women's publications as well as numerous other materials relating to women's substance abuse prevention and treatment. It operates the Center's electronic communications systems, PrevLine, which is available via the Internet and via direct dial-up at (301) 770-0850. It also distributes many of SAMHSA's grants application kits to interested organizations.

Medical School Model Curriculum. A first medical school model curriculum on women's health issues has been developed by HHS in order to bring women's health into the mainstream of medical education.

Directory of Women's Health Residency and Fellowship Opportunities. The HHS Office of Women's Health has prepared and widely disseminated a first-of-its-kind directory of women's health residency and fellowship opportunities in medicine.

Continuing Education for Health Providers. The Department of Agriculture helps rural health providers keep up to date with the latest health information via long distance learning and telemedicine programs.

LEGAL ACCESS AND PROTECTION

Americans with Disabilities. The Department of Justice Civil Rights Division has the lead federal responsibility for enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, a comprehensive civil rights law for people with disabilities. According to recent U.S. Census statistics, approximately 20 percent of the female population of the U.S. has a disability, a rate slightly higher than that of males. Although the DOJ's enforcement activities are not targeted exclusively at women, they often result in outcomes that benefit women.

The ADA prohibits disability-based discrimination in the provision of health care. In addition to investigating and resolving complaints of discrimination by health care providers, the Department has funded technical assistance grants designed to inform individuals and entities of their rights and obligations under the ADA with respect to the provision of health care services.

Institutionalized Persons. Pursuant to the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act, the Department of Justice enforces the federal constitutional and statutory rights of persons confined in public institutions. The DOJ has sought to protect Fourteenth Amendment due process rights of mentally disabled institutionalized persons and juveniles, and pre-trial detainees' rights to adequate medical and mental health care. Moreover, in prison cases the DOJ has succeeded in ensuring prisoners' Eighth Amendment right to be free from cruel and unusual punishment in the form of lack of adequate medical and mental health care. As part of these services, DOJ has required prenatal and other specialized medical services for women.

Female Prison Inmates. The Department of Justice Bureau of Prisons provides its female inmates with a complete range of health care services, including gynecological care.

Eliminating Harmful and Medically Unnecessary Medical Treatments. The Department of Justice Civil Division's Office of Consumer Litigation enforces and defends the Food and Drug Administration's actions and regulations aimed at eliminating harmful, medically unnecessary or coercive medical treatments of women. The DOJ also enforces and defends FDA's efforts at ensuring the safety of drugs and medical devices through FDA's national regulatory process.

GLOBAL INITIATIVES

Reproductive Health. The Agency for International Development has the goal of achieving improvements in women's reproductive health, including sustainable reductions in unintended pregnancies and maternal mortality. USAID has been a leader in reproductive health among donors, supporting programs in family planning, maternal health and nutrition, and breastfeeding in developing countries in every region. These include innovative community-based approaches,

often involving women's non-governmental organizations, as well as support for building local capacity in service delivery, training and communications, commodity procurement and logistics management, research and data collection, program evaluation, and policy development.

- ❖ **Reproductive Rights in Romania.** Romanian women are unable to exercise their reproductive rights due to a number of complex factors, including former Ministry of Health policy. Despite the availability of modern contraceptives, there are two abortions for every live birth in the country. Maternal mortality in Romania is more than four times the rate of Western European countries. Two-thirds of these deaths can be attributed to unsafe abortions.

USAID will work with Romanians to institute a country-wide communications campaign to help women successfully advocate for their reproductive rights, including knowledge of and access to modern forms of contraception. With a focus on reproductive rights as defined by the UN conferences in Cairo and Beijing, this program will play a critical role in addressing high maternal mortality and ensuring that women have access to information and modern contraception.

C.2. Strengthen preventive programs that promote women's health.

- ❖ **“Women's Health: Take Time to Care.”** The goals of this national public education initiative are to empower women to achieve optimal health by providing education about their use of FDA-regulated products (Food and Drug Administration). The initial educational message, “Use Medicines Wisely,” has been identified as an important health goal for women and their families that is not adequately met. The “Use Medicines Wisely” Program will be implemented in various cities in coordination with national leaders, as well as local networks of community leaders and health care providers. These leaders will provide advice regarding the implementation of this program in various cities and communities. Local groups and health care providers will deliver educational messages in collaboration with FDA.

CANCER PREVENTION

National Action Plan on Breast Cancer. A major public-private partnership that is working to improve research, treatment, prevention, and public and health care professional education on breast cancer. [See C.4 for more information.]

- ❖ **Osteoporosis Prevention.** This HHS program will assess the effectiveness of a medical provider-based educational and community outreach intervention targeting low income Asian and Caucasian women aged 40 and older who are at increased risk of osteoporosis. Components will include a brief assessment; health education; and counseling from medical and health providers about the risks, outcomes, and options for environmental support. The overall objective of this project is to increase the proportion

of women who receive appropriate provider interventions, including community support, and who meet the behavioral goals.

- ❖ **Osteoporosis Education Campaign.** The PHS Office of Women's Health will launch a national education campaign on osteoporosis in 1997 that targets teenage girls, ages 13-18, the age at which positive healthy behaviors (e.g. exercise, adequate calcium intake) can have significant effect on bone strength that can last a lifetime.

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND OTHER DRUG ABUSE AND MENTAL ILLNESS

National Women's Resource Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drug Abuse and Mental Illness. HHS established the Resource Center in August 1994 for the purpose of gathering, synthesizing, and disseminating innovative and promising research and demonstration findings with critical implications for women. The Center provides knowledge development, information and referral services, and training and technical assistance services on the prevention and treatment of women's substance abuse and mental illness across the lifecycle. It is a collaborative effort involving fiscal and programmatic responsibilities for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, Center for Mental Health Services, and Office for Women's Services as well as funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration's Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

Through the National Women's Resource Center, SAMHSA is sponsoring the following initiatives/activities addressing poverty-related diseases:

Information and Referral Line. The Center operates a toll-free information and referral resource telephone line that provides community-based organizations, grantees, professional groups, political leaders, and service providers with specific information regarding prevention and treatment of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse and mental illness in women of all ages, particularly focusing on women at high risk for addictive and mental disorders such as low-income women.

Low Income Populations. Many individuals with severe addictive and mental disorders have low incomes and are dependent on public programs, and many of SAMHSA's current grant programs target low-income populations. SAMHSA is moving away from population-focused demonstration grants toward programs that will provide usable knowledge about policy issues affecting substance abuse and mental health services delivery. It is very likely that at least some of the new grants will focus on issues of particular relevance to low-income women with addictive and mental disorders.

Mental Illness and Substance Abuse. SAMSHA programs support demonstration programs for substance abuse prevention among adolescent women as well as residential substance abuse treatment for pregnant women and women with dependent children. In FY 1997, SAMHSA is directing about \$123 million to women's substance abuse and mental health activities.

[See also discussion of SAMSHA's Female Adolescent Campaign under L. 5.]

ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION BY PREGNANT WOMEN

USDA's WIC program has recently issued materials to increase awareness of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome among Native Americans and Alaska Natives (who are disproportionately affected by Fetal Alcohol Syndrome) for distribution to state and tribal governments.

TOBACCO USE AND WOMEN

Tobacco use is the single leading preventable cause of death in the United States. It kills more than 400,000 Americans each year — more people each year than AIDS, car accidents, alcohol, homicides, illegal drugs, suicides, and fires combined. Studies suggest that anyone who does not begin to use tobacco as a child or adolescent is unlikely to start as an adult. The Department of Health and Human Services has several initiatives to decrease tobacco use in women, adolescents and children:

Guidelines on smoking cessation. The Agency for Health Care Policy and Research's guidelines on smoking cessation are based on a scientific review of what does and does not work to help people quit smoking and are targeted for both clinicians and consumers. Guideline recommendations include involvement of a clinician, nicotine replacement therapy, and intervention programs to help smokers. Copies are available in several languages by calling 1-800-358-9295.

Children and Adolescents. Regulations are in place to restrict the sale and distribution of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco to protect children and adolescents. These regulations include the following:

- requiring age verification by photo ID by anyone under the age of 27;
- banning vending machines and self-service displays except in "adult" facilities where persons under 18 are not allowed;
- banning free samples;
- prohibiting outdoor advertising within 1,000 feet of schools and public playgrounds;
- permitting black and white text only in advertising publications with significant youth readership, i.e. more than 15% or more than 2 million readers under 18;
- prohibiting sale and distribution of non-tobacco items, such as products like caps;
- limiting sponsorships of sporting and other events to the corporate name.

The Department is disseminating consistent public health messages on tobacco aimed at increasing awareness in minorities, Girl Scouts, college-aged adolescents, pregnant women, and the general public and health care professionals.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The HHS Office of Minority Health coordinated the Family and Community Violence Prevention

Program, which led to the establishment of Family Life Centers at 19 historically Black and Minority Colleges/Universities to address the problem of family and community violence.

The PHS Office on Women's Health has been instrumental in the development of a video-kit and facilitators guide, "Get Real" which is targeted toward college-aged women and addresses critical health issues including intimate and partner violence. OWH has supported several cross agency projects which include the National Domestic Violence Hotline, expansion of training efforts for health care professionals, and the production of a national research agenda with DOJ.

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) administers \$70 million for the provision of shelters to victims of family violence and their dependents. ACF funds four national resource centers — domestic violence resource network, battered women's justice project, resource center on child custody and protection and the health resource center on domestic violence. The National Domestic Violence Toll-free Hotline (1-800-799-SAFE) is awarded through ACF to the Texas Council on Family Violence. Issues for youth are addressed through the model curriculum on domestic violence, education and prevention services to reduce sexual assault among homeless youth, the Head Start program, family preservation and family support program, the Cities in Schools project and the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect. The Office of Refugee Resettlement, through the Community and Family Strengthening program, provides discretionary grants to public and private non-profit agencies to fund domestic violence prevention and response services for refugees resettled in the USA.

TEEN PREGNANCY

HHS efforts to reduce teen pregnancy include abstinence-focused demonstration programs as well as supporting community-wide coalitions to test innovative approaches. HHS has published a guidebook for communities, Preventing Teen Pregnancy: Promoting Promising Strategies. In addition, the new Welfare Reform Act includes provisions requiring teen mothers to live at home, stay in school, and turn their lives around. The Act also earmarks new funds for teen pregnancy prevention programs and requires at least 25 percent of communities to have teen pregnancy prevention programs in place.

[See also discussion of HHS initiatives regarding teen pregnancy under L.8. and Department of Education Initiatives under B.1.]

NUTRITION

Programs for Pregnant, Post-Partum, and Breastfeeding Women. The Department of Agriculture's Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) provides a targeted nutritious food package, nutrition education, and health care referrals to over 1.6 million pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women per month. In addition, through the Farmer's Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), WIC provides participants with access to vitamin and fiber-rich fresh fruits and vegetables. The WIC program has been demonstrated to improve birth outcomes — prenatal WIC participation reduces low birth

weight and infant mortality, and increases average gestational age. In addition, women who participate in WIC are more likely to receive prenatal health care.

USDA continually works to ensure that WIC is addressing the specific nutrition and health needs of the women it serves. For example, breastfeeding is given high priority in the WIC program, and WIC participants are strongly encourage to breastfeed. Women who breastfeed are favored in the priority system (i.e., they receive priority for service if funds are limited); they receive a greater variety and quantity of food than do non-breastfeeding women; and they can participate in WIC for longer than non-breastfeeding postpartum women.

Programs for the Elderly. Recognizing that 85 percent of older individuals have a nutrition-related condition or chronic disease, HHS' Administration on Aging supports community nutrition services. Each year, nutrition assistance funds help provide about 250 million meals for older persons. About 60 percent of the meals recipients are women. Federal spending on these programs is leveraged by state, local and private funds.

- ❖ **Healthy People 2000 Prevention Efforts.** USDA will target vulnerable female adults in Healthy People 2000 efforts. Female adults who are at risk of nutrition and health problems will be the focus of new activities implementing the Healthy People 2000 initiative. USDA will work together with other federal agencies and professional and civic volunteer organizations to tailor programs for this group.

NUTRITION EDUCATION

- ❖ **Team Nutrition.** The Department of Agriculture plans to expand the successful "Team Nutrition" approach to nutrition education to the Food Stamp and WIC Programs. The Team Nutrition approach, originally developed to implement a major restructuring of the National School Lunch Program, emphasizes nutrition education and technical assistance to program providers. By leveraging government resources through private-public partnerships, Team Nutrition promotes food choices for a healthful diet through the media, schools, families, and the community.

Dietary Guidelines for Americans. USDA also provides nutrition education to the general public. USDA, with the HHS, publishes the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and USDA places high priority on developing and updating nutrition education materials in support of this publication. The guidelines specifically address the diet and health needs of women, such as the greater need for iron, calcium and folate. USDA offers nutrition education sessions around the country which are focused on the Dietary Guidelines and also participates in other health promotion activities. A majority of participants in these activities are women. For example, USDA recently conducted an HIV/STD video training conference and a video training on breast and cervical cancer in September 1996.

- ❖ **Team Nutrition Corners in WIC Clinics.** As part of its effort to expand Team Nutrition to WIC, USDA, in cooperation with State and local WIC directors, has developed Team Nutrition materials for use in WIC clinics. The materials, called "Tickle Your Appetite," are appropriate for a low literacy and pre-school aged audience.

They include posters, growth charts, videos, and educational materials for use by children and their parents in WIC clinics and at home. Expanding the Team Nutrition approach will strengthen WIC's role in educating mothers and their pre-school age children about the link between good nutrition and health.

Food Safety. The Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration protect consumer health by ensuring that food products are safe, wholesome, and accurately labeled. USDA's Food Safety Education Public Awareness Campaign is designed to help prevent foodborne illness resulting from the improper handling of these and other food products. Though not specifically targeted towards women, women are a critical target audience for this campaign given that they are often the primary food handlers/preparers in households. The campaign includes distribution of food safety information through the media, state offices, senior and child care centers, and other settings where food preparation occurs.

TRANSPORTATION

The goal of decreasing transportation related injuries, deaths and related health care costs will be reached by using a variety of methods including education, regulation, enforcement, and engineering. The Department of Transportation is undertaking the following actions:

- Continue to conduct and support the private sector utilizing research, development and testing of systems and equipment used to protect operators and passengers of motorized vehicles. This includes development of more representative test dummies, i.e., children and pregnant women, development of a "smart" airbag that can be safely used to protect all vehicle passengers regardless of size, child safety seats that fit and are effective in all motor vehicles, modifying current seat belts based on load limiters, etc.
- Assist and promote the establishment of national, state and community coalitions to address the transportation safety problems facing the nation. Promote the establishment of community based coalitions through implementation of the "Building Safe Communities" program sponsored by the DOT. Continue forming national coalitions such as The Partnership for a Walkable America (pedestrian safety) and the National Automotive Occupant Protection Campaign in response to transportation safety issues national in scope.
- Sponsor aggressive education programs that highlight the dangers of excessive speed, drugged or drunk driving, inexperience in operating motor vehicles including cars, boats, motorcycles, etc., careless pedestrian behavior, and other behavioral problems.
- Promote and support increased law enforcement of safety related transportation laws including but not limited to seat belt, bicycle and motorcycle helmet, personal flotation devices (life jackets) and child safety seat usage, drunk driving, speed, and other laws relating to operator behavior.
- Continue to update and change federal standards for transportation vehicles and equipment to incorporate technological advancements, changing public needs and travel patterns, and environmental changes.

- Develop a strategic plan to accommodate the growing numbers of elderly who will be transportation providers and consumers in the 21st century. This will focus on the medical issues, licensing, and alternative transportation means to ensure better mobility and safety in the future.
- ❖ **Coordination and Cooperation.** The goal of reducing transportation fatalities and injuries will be reached through the involvement of federal, state and local governments, non-governmental national organizations (Mothers Against Drunk Driving, National Safe Boating Coalition, Partnership for a Walkable America, National Safety Council, International Association of Chiefs of Police, etc.), manufacturers, businesses, educators, doctors, nurses and all others in the health field, law enforcement, civic groups, etc.
- ❖ **Child Safety Seat Standards.** In 1997, the DOT will issue regulations establishing for the first time a national standard for an occupant restraint system that will allow all child safety seats to properly fit in all motor vehicles manufactured in future model years. The DOT will also develop and distribute an interactive CD Rom that will provide consumers important information on determining which child safety seat fits in their vehicle and how to properly install the seat.
- ❖ **Patterns for Life.** Over the next three years, the DOT will sponsor a national “Patterns for Life” campaign. The campaign goal is to develop safety habits for all the nation’s children by establishing safe transportation behavior starting with an infant’s first ride home from the hospital. This effort will include the training of community workers to provide the information to local citizens.

C.3. Undertake gender-sensitive initiatives that address sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, and sexual and reproductive health issues.

HIV/AIDS AND STDs

Women account for an increasing number of AIDS cases. They were only 7 percent of all AIDS cases in 1985, but increased to 18 percent in 1994. AIDS is now the fourth leading cause of death among women aged 25-44. And AIDS is increasing faster among women than among men. Women of childbearing age account for the vast majority of these cases. Many operational divisions and offices within the Department of Health and Human Services have initiatives addressing HIV/AIDS, one of the most devastating diseases of our times, and addressing other sexually transmitted diseases, STDs, that also have had a lasting impact on women’s health.

Administration for Children and Families (ACF). ACF’s central mission is to provide services for families. In the delivery of those services many of their programs, though not specifically for persons with HIV/AIDS and STDs, do impact those women and children. For example:

- Head Start serves children with HIV/AIDS;
- The Family Service Centers focus on substance abuse prevention and treatment, which are intrinsically linked to HIV/AIDS;
- Child welfare programs provide services to children who are in the foster care system due to HIV/AIDS;
- The abandoned infants assistance program addresses boarder babies who have problems frequently associated with HIV/AIDS;
- Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs provide temporary residential care and counseling for youth who may be at risk for or infected with HIV/AIDS;
- The Developmental Disabilities program which provides funds to programs of national significance which seek to overcome barriers to services for disabled persons with HIV/AIDS.

AHCPR (Agency for Health Care Policy and Research). AHCPR sponsors a wide variety of health services research and medical outcomes research relevant to women's health. It makes materials available in several languages. It has informed pregnant HIV-infected women of the risks and benefits of ZDV (AZT) therapy. The Agency also conducts an ongoing survey of the costs and use of health care services by HIV/AIDS patients, with gender-specific analysis.

CDC Research. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is the agency that tracks HIV/AIDS throughout the nation. The HIV/AIDS surveillance system is an ongoing study that provides descriptive information on the number and characteristics of persons reported with AIDS in all states and HIV in some states. CDC has commissioned several studies to assess adherence of HIV positive drug users to drug treatment regimes; define the spectrum of HIV/AIDS; assess the adherence and barriers to adherence of using ZDV (AZT) during pregnancy; and heterosexual partner research. Epidemiological research into the natural history of HIV disease in women is also being conducted.

CDC Prevention. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provides training for family planning providers, prevention programs among Latinas, and a National College Health Risk Survey which includes a nationally representative sample of students aged 18 and older attending 2-4 year colleges in 1995. National and regional minority organizations receive cooperative agreements to provide technical assistance to health departments, CBOs and HIV/AIDS organizations. The Prevention of HIV in Women and Infants Project addresses ZDV use in pregnancy. STD/HIV intervention programs include chlamydia, human papilloma virus, herpes, syphilis, and gonorrhea. Health care worker studies include compliance with Hepatitis B Vaccine.

- **Counseling pregnant women.** The CDC is urging physicians to counsel all pregnant women on the benefit of HIV testing. New guidelines and educational materials have been produced by the CDC for women and health care providers in response to evidence that treating HIV-positive pregnant women with ZDV (AZT) can reduce the risk of transmitting the disease to the infant from 25% to 8%.

FDA Clinical Trials. The FDA (Food and Drug Administration) is responsible for the approval of all new drugs and other therapies for the treatment of HIV/AIDS. There are ongoing vaccine trials and the development of home test kits for HIV/AIDS detection. Through the clinical trials process, FDA has approved maternal ZDV use to reduce transmission of HIV to the infant, development of microbicides, and new technologies in testing for STDs.

FDA Preventive Outreach. The FDA Office of Women's Health has supported outreach efforts to minority women in under-served communities for health education about the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS and STDs.

Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA). Through Medicare and Medicaid, HCFA has provided health care coverage for more than 73 million Americans. Nearly 60% of the beneficiaries are women. In cooperation with CDC, AHCPR and state program offices, a pilot program was initiated in Delaware, Rhode Island, New Jersey, and Florida to educate pregnant women about the value of counseling, voluntary testing and treatment with ZDV to reduce transmission of HIV to their infants. This program will be expanded to 15 sites in 1997.

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). In view of the upward trend in the proportion of women with HIV/AIDS, HRSA, through its prevention and support services, continues to address the social, economic, behavioral factors associated with HIV transmission. Their programs include demonstration models for services to HIV-infected youth; a women's initiative for HIV care and reduction of perinatal HIV transmission; intervention projects for HIV-infected and substance abusing women; Ryan White Care Act Title II health and support services to women and children; migrant farm worker women's initiative; AIDS education and training programs for health care providers; and program guidance for health providers on reducing perinatal HIV. Research is supported on health care utilization and medical adherence among African-American women; AIDS cost and service utilization; women and HIV transmission; and assessment of training needs of health providers for pregnant women at high risk for or with HIV infections.

The National Institutes of Health is the nation's federal research agency. Many Institutes and Offices have programs and initiatives dedicated to women HIV/AIDS and STDs:

The Office of AIDS Research has supported many such projects, including breastfeeding associated with HIV transmission; women and infants transmission study; herpes simplex shedding and HIV plasma load; STD research; control of AIDS prevention; and mucosal immunity in the female reproductive tract.

- ◆ **Microbicide initiative.** In 1996, HHS announced a new effort to develop safe and effective topical microbicides to help women protect themselves against HIV infection. The initiative includes a \$100 million commitment to research and development over four years.

The National Institute of Allergies and Infectious Disease has studied maternal ZDV use, chlamydia infections, vaccine safety and immunogenicity, pregnancy and perinatal

transmission, topical microbicides, a domestic HIV vaccine preparedness study and STD cooperative research centers.

The National Cancer Institute has studies which address HIV transmission, cancer match registry, AIDS-related cancers, and transmission of immunodeficiency.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse funds programs on etiology and pathogenesis, biological and behavioral aspects among female sero-positive drug users; epidemiological research study; gender issues; perinatal issues; adolescent HIV research; community-based outreach intervention research program; a program on service and utilization of services. They have also funded a national media campaign to reach various segments of the public with information about the relationship between drugs, sexual activity and the risk of HIV infection. The first phase was targeted toward young teens entitled, “AIDS, Another Way Drugs Can Kill You” and the video “Get High, Get Stupid, Get AIDS” was developed and targeted to adolescents 18- to 24-year-olds who no longer lived with their parents.

The National Institute for Child Health and Human Development has also funded studies such as the mothers and infants cohort study, women and infants transmission study, sexual transmission of HIV, and adolescent AIDS.

The National Institute on Mental Health has taken an active role in funding AIDS-related research because issues related to mental health arise at every point in the development of AIDS. A behavioral epidemiological study of AIDS-related risk behaviors, knowledge, beliefs and HIV serostatus among women has provided a better understanding of the behavior underlying the increase in heterosexual transmission and has allowed for more effective targeted interventions.

Also, the **National Institute of Nursing Research** has supported research related to interventions to improve the care of individuals infected with HIV. The **Office of Alternative Medicine** provides funding to assure the inclusion of women in a study of patient outcomes for infected patients using complementary and alternative therapies. The **Fogarty International Center** contributed to a study of Vitamin A as a risk factor for mother to child transmission of HIV. The **Office of Research on Women’s Health** co-funds research related to HIV/AIDS and STDs for women.

Approximately 75% of women with HIV/AIDS contracted the disease through drug use or sexual contact with a drug user. **The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration** has several grant programs which identify women as a priority population. These include the mental health demonstration grants, the health care worker mental health training program, community outreach program and the primary care linkage program. Through the Girl Power campaign, a national information campaign to empower young girls, they have increased awareness of health promotion and prevention of disease for this vulnerable population.

PHS Office on Women’s Health (OWH). OWH is the focal point for the coordination of women’s health activities throughout HHS. Through the Coordinating Committee on Women’s

Health, a working group on HIV/AIDS has drafted a Fact Sheet on women and HIV/AIDS. OWH continually provides educational sessions on HIV/AIDS through its Healthy Women 2000 series in regional workshops and its first national minority women's health conference. This office was essential in the distribution of the consumer education materials for HIV infected pregnant women on the benefits and risk of ZDV (AZT) therapy to community women's groups.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Reproductive Health and Family Planning Services. These services, under the Title X program, are provided to nearly 5 million people each year, nearly one-third of whom are under 20 years of age and 85% of whom are from low-income households. Services provided under this program include medical care related to contraception, infertility, STDs and HIV, as well as general reproductive health care and education, counseling and referral services. To address male involvement in preventing unintended pregnancy, the Title X Family Planning Program will supplement existing community-based programs to develop effective approaches for providing family planning education and services to males.

HHS supports a variety of programs to help women plan and prepare for pregnancy as well as to promote healthy pregnancies and births. It sponsors a wide range of research activities including efforts to enhance understanding and treatment of conditions that affect women's reproductive health across their life span, as well as during pregnancy; develop new methods of contraception that prevent pregnancy and protect against sexually transmitted diseases (STDs); and ultimately improve and safeguard the health and well-being of women. Ongoing HHS-supported education and outreach activities contribute to promoting women's reproductive health.

Access to Prenatal Care. The Department's Healthy Start demonstration program serves approximately 1.6 million pregnant women and infants in 22 communities with high infant mortality rates. These demonstration projects have developed promising models for collaborative community-based interventions to help reduce infant mortality, increase the number of pregnant women who receive adequate prenatal care, and to improve the health and well-being of women, infants and their families.

Medicaid. States are required to provide Medicaid coverage to all pregnant women with incomes below 133% of the federal poverty level. States may choose to expand eligibility to pregnant women with incomes up to 185% of poverty or higher. Currently, 34 states provide Medicaid coverage to pregnant women above the federally mandated level to help them receive prenatal care and other pregnancy-related services. Many states have also enhanced the prenatal care services that are reimbursable through Medicaid. As of 1993, 44 state Medicaid programs paid for an enhanced package of prenatal services to pregnant women under fee-for-services arrangements.

Reproductive Health Research. HHS supports a variety of biomedical, behavioral, and health services research pertaining to women's reproductive health. Examples of these efforts include:

- The contraceptive development research program, which reviews existing contraceptive technologies and improves current methods or develops new ones to create a broader array of acceptable contraceptive options for women as well as men;
- Development of female-controlled barrier methods of contraception and vaginal spermicides with microbicidal activity;
- Research into the processes underlying the success or failure of human reproduction and fertility regulation;
- Prevention of premature labor; alcohol and drug use during pregnancy;
- STDs and adverse outcomes of pregnancy;
- The effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of outpatient antibiotic treatment versus inpatient intravenous therapy for pelvic inflammatory disease (a condition that can lead to infertility); comparisons of drug therapies.

The Agency for Health Care Policy and Research. Activities include research on:

- “Watchful waiting,” and other alternatives to hysterectomy for treating non-cancerous conditions of the uterus;
- Periodic analysis of data on surgical procedures performed for the top gynecologic conditions, including pelvic inflammatory disease, endometriosis, fibroid tumors, benign ovarian cysts, and menstrual disorders;
- The use and outcomes of Caesarean section versus alternatives with an emphasis on patient outcomes and on determining factors influencing physician and patient decision making; and
- Practice variations that aim to prevent low birth weight.

RU-486. Action by HHS helped facilitate the transfer of U.S. patent rights for mifepristone (RU-486), a drug used in France for nonsurgical termination of pregnancy, from a French pharmaceutical firm to an American non-profit organization. This transfer made it possible for the drug to be submitted to the FDA for approval for U.S. marketing. In 1996 the FDA determined that submitted clinical data demonstrate the safety and efficacy of mifepristone — in combination with misoprostol when used under close medical supervision.

STD Prevention. HHS has provided \$8.3 million to support implementation of the National Infertility Prevention Program to prevent and treat STDs, particularly chlamydia. This program is a collaborative effort between the CDC and the PHS Office of Population Affairs that involves strong collaboration among family planning, STD, and primary health care programs, as well as state laboratories.

Global Initiatives. One of the Agency for International Development’s goals is to achieve improvements in women’s reproductive health, including by reducing HIV/AIDS transmission. Within the context of its broader programs, USAID specifically addresses HIV/AIDS prevention for women through a variety of projects:

- In collaboration with the International Center for Research on Women, USAID designed a Women and AIDS Research Program to identify the behavioral, sociocultural and economic factors that influence women's vulnerability to HIV and opportunities for reducing women's risk of infection. Seventeen research projects sponsored by the program in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean yielded important insights into the realities of women's lives and resulted in a set of policy and program recommendations. USAID has now supported expanding eight of these projects and enabling research teams to implement intervention strategies identified during the research phase of the study. Projects are now underway in Mexico, Thailand, Senegal, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Brazil.
- USAID has also launched a program to strengthen HIV/AIDS prevention efforts for women through the AIDSCAP Project. Activities include a project with the Women's Market Association of Senegal to link HIV/AIDS prevention with economic empowerment of women, planning for a regional workshop on women and AIDS in Asia, and training to help community volunteers working with young women in the Dominican Republic adopt a more gender-sensitive approach to HIV/AIDS prevention.
- USAID will continue to promote attention to women's reproductive health, and particularly highlight the importance of a focus on women in HIV/AIDS prevention, in its donor coordination efforts. A successful collaboration on these issues is currently underway with the Government of Japan under the U.S./Japan Common Agenda.

Prison Inmates and Staff. The Department of Justice Bureau of Prisons offers a comprehensive, mandatory education program for all inmates (women and men) on HIV/AIDS, with a strong emphasis on universal precautions. All BOP staff (men and women) are provided a comprehensive, mandatory education program on HIV/AIDS, with a strong emphasis on universal precautions.

[See also K. 3. for EPA's Gender Impact and Integrated Risk Assessments initiative.]

C.4. Promote research and disseminate information on women's health.

CLINICAL TRIALS

Legally-Mandated Inclusion of Women and Minorities as Subjects of Research. Health and Human Services agencies have long encouraged the inclusion of women as subjects in clinical research. The inclusion of women and minorities is mandated in the National Institutes of Health Revitalization Act of 1993, and, in response, NIH revised its existing policy and published new Guidelines for the Inclusion of Women and Minorities in Clinical Research in

1994. These policies are monitored by the NIH Office of Research on Women's Health. Similar policies and procedures exist for other HHS agencies, such as the FDA's Guideline for Study and Evaluation of Gender Differences in the Clinical Evaluation of Drugs.

Special Initiatives. HHS established an internal interagency advisory council on AIDS research and women to review research and develops strategies to enhance the care of women. Other HHS studies which focus on increasing the representation of women in clinical trials include:

- trials of hormone replacement therapy to reduce heart disease risk factors in postmenopausal women;
- calcium supplementation;
- use of tamoxifen to prevent coronary heart disease in postmenopausal women;
- trials of vitamin E, beta-carotene, and aspirin for primary prevention of cardiovascular disease in women;
- use of nonpharmacological interventions to prevent the rise of cholesterol in menopausal women; and
- organ transplantation.

Sometimes the topic of the study is of such relevance that the patient population will consist primarily or entirely of women, such as:

- studies of diet, nutrition, and obesity in African-American women;
- treatment strategies for osteoporosis;
- effects of exercise on pregnancy;
- studies of premenstrual syndrome; and
- the effect of Norplant on risk factors for cardiovascular disease.

CANCER RESEARCH

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in American women. In 1995, an estimated 1,252,000 new cancers were diagnosed and 547,000 persons died of this disease. About 46 percent of the new cancer cases and 47 percent of cancer deaths occurred in women.

The National Action Plan on Breast Cancer. In December 1993, HHS convened an historic conference to develop a National Action Plan on Breast Cancer. The result is a major public-private partnership, coordinated by the PHS Office on Women's Health. Among its purposes is to increase women's participation in breast cancer clinical trials, investigate the causes of breast cancer, and improve consumer involvement in breast cancer policy and research.

The National Institutes of Health, the lead federal agency for cancer research in the United States, carries on a comprehensive program of investigations to address the etiology, detection, diagnosis, treatment, prevention, and control of cancer. Progress in scientific research has led to

many significant advancements in our understanding of the causes of cancer and the molecular foundations of normal and malignant cellular development.

SPECIFIC RESEARCH STUDIES ADDRESSING CRITICAL ISSUES RELATED TO WOMEN:

- hereditary breast cancer (HHS-supported research led to the isolation of BRCA1, a gene linked to breast cancer in 5 through 10 percent of cases, a discovery that may lead to new treatment and prevention strategies);
- breast cancer treatment;
- development of new imaging technologies; and
- quality of life in women with breast cancer.

LARGE POPULATION STUDIES:

- cervical cancer; and
- genetic and hormonal factors associated with lung cancer.

Studies of Subgroups of Women. Throughout NIH, a number of research studies are underway to obtain information about specific cancers and coping strategies for subgroup populations. For example:

- Older women are being surveyed to determine their roles in treatment decisions, their treatment preferences, and how they assess their quality of life.
- Several studies are examining any association between hormone replacement therapy and breast cancer.
- Numerous efforts are taken to benefit minority populations in studies and programs involving migrant farmers, rural residents, and public housing residents.

TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

- **Imaging Technology.** The PHS Office on Women's Health is working with federal agencies, including the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Department of Defense, and the Central Intelligence Agency, as well as private companies, to adapt high-tech imaging technology to improve the early detection of cancer in women. A multi-site, clinical trial is being supported to evaluate the effectiveness of intelligence technology in improving the early detection of breast cancer.

The CIA is contributing advanced imaging technologies; originally developed for intelligence collection, these change-detection and pattern-recognition technologies may enable earlier detection of breast tumors. The Department of Commerce National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Advanced Technology Program is funding projects which are developing technologies with applications particularly beneficial to women, such as improvements to high-resolution

mammography. DOC/NIST's Physics Laboratory is contributing to the reduction of X-ray exposure during mammograms through a new radiation standard and instrument calibration facility.

- **Other Technology Developments.** Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology Chemical Science and Technology Laboratory is conducting research on homogeneous flow immunoassay for measuring serum cancer markers as a method to screen serum samples for the presence of a breast tumor, as well as projects on other technologies with applications particularly beneficial to women with breast, colon, and other cancers.

Technologies to Help the Deaf. In 1996, the Central Intelligence Agency held a two-day seminar on intelligence technologies that might help the profoundly deaf. The seminar, offered in conjunction with the National Security Agency, sought to identify technologies that could be transferred to U.S. manufacturers of cochlear implants. These implants help the profoundly deaf, for whom traditional hearing aids are not effective.

WOMEN AND AGING

Research on Diseases of Older Women. Women comprise 60 percent of the age 65 and over population, and the percentage is growing. Although women's life expectancy is seven years longer than that of men, they have higher rates of chronic disease, disability, and use of medical care in later life. HHS sponsors research programs on diseases of older women:

- **Osteoporosis.** HHS is sponsoring research into the underlying causes, diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of osteoporosis and related bone disorders, such as osteoarthritis. There is also an epidemiological study to evaluate the role of personal factors in the occurrence of injuries from falls.
- **Cardiovascular disease.** Heart disease and stroke are the leading causes of death in American women. HHS has ongoing research on the influence of age, gender, race, and risk factors on cardiovascular disease, as well as programs targeted to assessing the risk of CVD among African-American women.
- **Menopause.** HHS is sponsoring comprehensive multi-disciplinary research on the natural history of menopause. Estrogen replacement therapy in post-menopausal women is being studied in its relation to prevention of osteoporosis, cardiovascular disease, and even Alzheimer's disease.
- **Cancer.** An example of ongoing research is a study on the effectiveness and cost of alternative therapies in the treatment of breast cancer.
- **Reproductive and Urinary Tract Systems.** These systems show changes in biology and function with aging.

Hysterectomy, the second most frequently performed major operation in the U.S., involves removal of the uterus. Since very little is known about the natural history of menopause, a high

priority is to examine appropriate indications for performing hysterectomy. The Agency for Health Care Policy and Research (AHCPR) is undertaking three large clinical studies on alternatives to hysterectomy for the treatment of benign conditions of the uterus. The trials will compare the effectiveness of pharmaceutical and other less invasive treatments to hysterectomy.

Urinary incontinence is a condition that greatly affects the quality of life of older women. HHS has an effort to increase knowledge among providers and the public regarding treatment of UI, as well as basic research on bladder conditions.

OTHER OLDER WOMEN'S HEALTH ISSUES THAT HHS IS EVALUATING INCLUDE

- the effects of aging on the immune system;
- dementia;
- quality of life;
- physical activity;
- alcohol consumption;
- care-giving issues;
- managed care issues;
- use of acute and long-term care facilities.

National Study of the Health of Women in their 40s and 50s. HHS's National Institute on Aging is sponsoring a large-scale national study to examine the health of women in their 40s and 50s. The study tracks the health of women during these transitional years of middle age to measure impact on later life. The study examines the physical, psychological, and social changes that take place at mid-life and focuses on behaviors such as having children after age 40, diet and exercise, alcohol consumption, and exposure to environmental toxins.

National Study of the Major Causes of Death, Disability, and Frailty in Post-Menopausal Women. HHS' National Institutes of Health Women's Health Initiative, with \$628 million in funding over 15 years and 40 sites, is one of the largest prevention studies of its kind. It has begun examining the major causes of death, disability, and frailty in post-menopausal women. It includes a clinical trial of promising but unproven approaches to prevention, an observational study to identify predictors of disease, and a study of community approaches to developing healthful behaviors. This multi-year study is examining the effects of low-fat diets on prevention of breast and colon cancer and coronary heart disease; the effect of hormone replacement therapy on prevention of coronary heart disease and osteoporotic fractures; and the effect of calcium and vitamin D supplementation on prevention of osteoporotic fractures. The community prevention trial portion of the study, being conducted with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, will evaluate strategies for adoption of healthful behaviors including improved diet, nutritional supplementation, smoking cessation, increased physical activity, and early detection for women of diverse races, ethnic groups, and socioeconomic groups.

Tobacco. Research efforts are underway and include basic research, as well as clinical, epidemiologic, and behavioral studies. Findings from recent epidemiologic studies suggest that women may be more susceptible to tobacco carcinogens than men. One study found that although women began to smoke later than men and smoked fewer and lighter tar cigarettes, women still had a high risk of developing lung cancer. Other studies are the effect on the fetus of maternal smoking during pregnancy, smoking cessation projects to test interventions, training of health care providers to help patients stop smoking, and tobacco use trends by gender, age, and race and ethnicity.

RESEARCH ON POVERTY-RELATED DISEASE

The National Institutes of Health are conducting the following studies:

- **Inner-City Asthma Study.** This study targets economically-challenged inner city areas and specifically targets children ages 5-10.
- **Cooperative Research Centers on Asthma, Allergic and Immunologic Diseases.** The Centers have as a major focus a coordinated approach to demonstration and education research projects which contain behavioral research to address a common theme similar to that pursued in the NCICA: reduction in the severity and/or incidence of asthma in minority urban populations. The behavioral research projects included in these Centers and the R-18s reflect the NIAID's emphasis on studies that specifically target health issues involving minorities and women and include such projects as the development of innovative computer-assisted education materials for inner-city children with asthma and their families, and environmental interventions directed at inner city homes.
- **National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders.** Funding research to examine the risk factors for otitis media in Native American children showing a higher incidence compared to general population. Studies are funded through an ORWH Supplement to an NIDCD Program Project Grant.
- **National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Disease.** Rheumatic disease investigators have demonstrated that the outcomes for women in such chronic disabling rheumatic diseases as rheumatoid arthritis and systemic lupus erythematosus are more severe in women from low socioeconomic status. The biological and behavioral risks factors underlying this observation are being investigated by two different research groups.
- **National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences.** Conducts a targeted research program focused on environmentally-related health problems of poor and ethnic minorities, many of which are unique to or impact most on women. Their services also involve women in community environmental health programs through environment justice and community outreach programs.
- **National Center for Research Resources.** Biological Models and Materials Research program funds research on a clam model of gonadal tumors which shows

that female clams retain more dioxin in their gonads than males and develop more tumors.

- **National Institute of Mental Health.** Recent research on schizophrenia supported by the NIMH suggests that while poverty does not cause the disorder, it is powerfully related to the experience of those suffering from it, their resources for coping with it, and perhaps their likelihood of recovery. However, socioeconomic or other psychosocial deprivations and stresses do seem to play a causal role in both the onset and course of depressive substance abuse and antisocial disorders. Further NIMH supported researchers now know that virtually all major psychological risk factors for mental illness (including chronic and acute stress, lack of social relationships and supports, and lack of control and mastery) are more prevalent at lower socioeconomic levels. Alleviating acute socioeconomic deprivation can often lessen the more serious long-term psychological consequences of these disorders.

NATIONAL HEART, LUNG, AND BLOOD INSTITUTE

NHLBI is supporting the following initiative:

- Research on effects of socioeconomic status and community disadvantage on asthma.
- Identification of social, behavioral, and health service factors in disadvantaged minority communities that can be targeted as effective points of health education and primary care intervention.
- Interventions to prevent high-risk nutritional patterns and inactivity among 6-10 year old African-American inner city youth.
- Research on relationship between social class and hypertension among women.
- Cardiovascular disease nutrition education for multi-ethnic, low-income women.
- Feasibility study recruiting and intervening with minority and/or low socioeconomic status women to assess the effect of a low-fat diet on heart disease in post-menopausal women.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF NURSING RESEARCH

- Community based Prevention/Intervention Research in EHS. NINR in collaboration with NIEHS is inviting research grant applications addressing development of community-based strategies aimed at prevention and intervention activities in economically disadvantaged and/or underserved populations adversely impacted by an environmental contaminant.
- The goal of this program is to improve the knowledge and behavior of disadvantaged or underserved community members regarding prevention, detection, and treatment of environmentally related diseases and health conditions and thereby reduce incidence and mortality rates of such diseases and conditions. [See also A.2. for EPA's Environmental Justice initiatives.]

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Both directly and through sponsored/cooperative research, the Department of Agriculture conducts an extensive amount of research on health and nutrition issues affecting women throughout the life cycle.

- ❖ Current or upcoming USDA projects include:
 - examination of the role of specific nutrients in women's diets (zinc in pregnancy);
 - dietary behaviors and outcomes (milk avoidance and calcium and fat intake);
 - food safety knowledge (consumer awareness of safe food handling practices);
 - nutrition-program related needs (special needs of pregnant adolescents and adolescent others in WIC); and
 - the links between economics and nutrition (economic benefits of breastfeeding).

Current university-level research funded by USDA includes 19 projects on women's health, ranging from a pregnancy nutrition surveillance system in the State of Hawaii to an evaluation of the impact of shift work on the nutritional status of women. The Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts University, and the Children's Nutrition Research Center at the Texas Medical Center (Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's Hospital) are also important components of USDA-supported research efforts.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AS EMPLOYER

Department of Defense. The Defense Women's Health Research Program was established in the Fiscal Year 1994 National Defense Authorization Act. The Program establishes a coordinating office for multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional research within the Department of Defense on women's health issues related to service in the Armed Forces.

- ❖ Future research within the Program will be directed according to the 1995 recommendations of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences. The four identified areas of research and a currently funded project within each category are:
 - **Factors Affecting Health and Work Performance.** Naval Health Research Center study, "Countermeasures to Heat Stress in Women."
 - **Psychological and Health Issues Related to Integration of Women into a Hierarchical Male Environment or to Women and Men Together in Close Quarters.** Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, "Integration of Women Into Military Units: Impact of Gender Bias and Sexual Harassment."
 - **Health Promotion and Disease Prevention.** U.S. Army Institute of Environmental Medicine, "Assessment of Iron Status and Dietary Intake of Female Army Soldiers."
 - **Access to and Delivery of Health Care.** Brooks Air Force Base, "Availability, Accessibility, and Adequacy of Health Care Provided to USAF Active Duty Women During Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm."

- ❖ **Policy Guidelines for Handling Reproductive Concerns.** The Air Force Reproductive Hazards Initiative Group at Brooks Air Force Base, Texas will develop a technical report on guidelines for handling reproductive concerns in the workplace. The guidelines will establish policy for pregnant women or women considering pregnancy. For example, the guidelines will recommend that women exposed to chemical or biological pollutants be placed in a less hazardous environment.

Injury and Illness among Female and Male Recruits. The Air Force Office of Prevention and Health Services Assessment is conducting a study to identify and compare types and frequency of injury and illness among female and male recruits.

Health Care for Deployment. The Navy conducts research on the unique requirements of health care for women on ships. The Department of the Army is researching and developing special women's health and hygiene care for deployment in the field.

Treatment for Rape Victims. Each Military Service has well-established guidelines for medical and legal procedures for treating rape victims, including treatment for psychological trauma.

C.5. Increase resources and monitor follow-up for women's health.

- ◆ **A National Focus on Women's Health.** The Department of Health and Human Services has focused increased resources and national attention on women's health issues. A new, senior level position, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health was established to coordinate and stimulate research, service delivery and education programs across the Department. Women's Health Coordinators have been appointed in all DHHS agencies to monitor the progress in the advancement of women's health. For FY 1996, direct funding of research and services by the HHS' Public Health Service agencies was about \$2.8 billion, up more than \$650 million (25 percent) since FY 1993.
- ◆ **Breast Cancer Research.** As part of the above funding increase, HHS funding for breast cancer research and programs increased from about \$90 million in 1990 to over \$500 million in FY 1997. Between FY 1993 and FY 1997, funding has nearly doubled, from \$275 million to an estimated \$513 million. DOD conducts breast cancer research and has allocated \$150 million in FY 1997.
- ◆ **Family Planning.** Total HHS Title X funding in FY 1997 is \$198 million, an increase of nearly \$50 million since 1992.
- ◆ **Topical Microbicides.** At the 11th International Conference on AIDS in 1996, HHS announced a new effort to develop safe and effective topical microbicides to help women protect themselves against HIV infection. The initiative includes a \$100 million commitment to research and development over four years.

NIH Women's Health Initiative (Older Women). This \$628 million, 15-year, 40-site initiative is one of the largest prevention studies of its kind. It has begun examining the major causes of death, disability, and frailty in post-menopausal women. It includes a clinical trial of promising but unproven approaches to prevention, as well as an observational study to identify predictors of disease, and a study of community approaches to developing healthful behaviors.

SAMHSA Data Collection Activities. SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) funds numerous data collection activities that are relevant for low-income women and women with or at risk for addictive and mental disorders. These include the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse which produces national estimates on the use of illicit drugs and the non-medical use of illicit drugs and collects data periodically on important related special topics such as mental illness, criminal behavior, treatment, and attitudes about drugs. The NHSDA also collects information on participation in public programs as well as information on income, family structure, employment, insurance status, and mental and substance abuse treatment utilization. SAMHSA is currently developing a women's report based on the Survey's findings.

[See also D.2. for description of HHS studies on domestic violence.]

D. Violence Against Women



Platform for Action Strategic Objectives:

- D.1. Take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women.
- D.2. Study the causes and consequences of violence against women and the effectiveness of preventive measures.
- D.3. Eliminate trafficking in women and assist victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking.

D. 1. Take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women.

LEGISLATION

The Violence Against Women Act of 1994. The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, combines tough new penalties with programs to better prosecute offenders and help victims of violence. Administered by the Department of Justice, the VAWA:

- Authorizes \$1.6 billion over five years to hire more prosecutors; improve domestic violence training for prosecutors, police officers, and health and social services professionals; provide for more shelters, counseling services, and research into the causes of violence against women, as well as public education campaigns.
- Increases criminal penalties for sex offenders and domestic abusers — doubling the maximum term of imprisonment for repeat sex offenders and authorizing severe federal sentences for abusers who travel interstate with the intent to injure, harass, or

intimidate a spouse or domestic partner or violate a protection order, when such conduct occurs thereafter. Also prohibits causing a spouse or intimate partner to cross state lines by force, coercion, duress, or fraud, during or as a result of which there is bodily injury to the victim.

- Provides that a civil protection order issued by the court of one state or tribe shall be accorded full faith and credit by the court of another state or tribe, and shall be enforced as if it were the order of the court of the second state or tribe.
- Requires the DOJ to study and evaluate the manner in which states have taken steps to protect the confidentiality of communications between sexual assault and/or domestic violence victims and their counselors.
- Establishes new federal remedies for abused immigrant spouses and children. Battered women are now eligible to apply for permanent resident status for themselves and their children and are no longer forced to rely on their abusive husbands to apply for such status.

The DOJ Civil Division has been defending the constitutionality of civil rights provisions of the Violence Against Women Act.

The Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexually Violent Offender

Registration Act of 1994. Part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, this Act provides states with a financial incentive to adopt effective registration systems for convicted child molesters and other persons convicted of sexually violent crimes. The Department of Justice administers the Act and has published guidelines to assist states in complying with the federal law.

- ◆ **Megan's Law.** In 1996, a federal Megan's Law was passed, amending the Jacob Wetterling Act to require states to release relevant information about registered offenders when necessary to protect the public. Prior to the enactment of Megan's Law, the Jacob Wetterling Act permitted, but did not require such disclosure. The Justice Department recently published guidelines to implement Megan's Law.

The Department of Justice Civil Division has been defending the constitutionality of a New Jersey law, also called *Megan's Law*. On July 29, 1994, a seven year old New Jersey girl, Megan Kanka, was sexually assaulted and murdered by a twice-convicted sex offender who moved in across the street from her family. At the time, there were no state laws authorizing notification of local law enforcement or the community concerning a sex offender's criminal history or presence in the neighborhood. *Megan's Law* created the New Jersey sex offender registration and notification system. In addition to defending New Jersey's *Megan's Law*, the DOJ has participated in litigation defending the validity of sex offender registration and notification systems in New York, Connecticut, and Washington State.

- ◆ **The Pam Lyncher Sexual Tracking and Identification Act of 1996.** This law requires the Attorney General to establish a national database at the FBI to track convicted sex offenders; requires the FBI to handle registration directly for sex offenders in states that

do not have “minimally sufficient” sex offender registration programs (as defined by the Act); and amends the Jacob Wetterling Act to prescribe more stringent registration requirements in some areas.

Other Provisions of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994. The following provisions are administered by the Department of Justice:

- New rules in federal sexual assault and child molestation cases, providing for admissibility of evidence that the defendant has committed other similar offenses, facilitate the effective prosecution of habitual sex offenders and provide the basis for informed decisions by juries.
- It is now unlawful for any person subject to a court order restraining that person from harassing, stalking, or threatening an intimate partner or the child of an intimate partner, to possess firearms or ammunition (intimate partners include spouses or former spouses but not girlfriends or boyfriends with whom the defendant has not cohabited). On-duty federal or state law enforcement officers and members of the military are exempted.

The National Child Protection Act of 1993. This Act, administered by the Department of Justice, establishes a national background check system that enables child care providers to determine whether employees and prospective employees have criminal records involving child abuse offenses. As a result of amendments adopted in the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, the National Child Protection Act system also covers background checks for providers of care for the elderly and persons with disabilities.

Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act of 1994. The Department of Justice Civil Division and Civil Rights Division have been defending the constitutionality of the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act (FACE), which was enacted in response to a nationwide campaign of violent and obstructive interference with access to reproductive health services.

For example, in March 1995, the DOJ Civil Rights Division filed a friend-of-the-court brief in *Pro-Choice Network v Project Rescue Western New York*. In this case, the Second Circuit Court of Appeals panel concluded that two provisions — a 15-foot “buffer zone” and a requirement that “sidewalk counselors” cease and desist when their targets seek to terminate the encounter — were unconstitutional. In September 1995, the Second Circuit (by a 13-2 vote) ruled that the provisions are constitutional, holding that given the defendants’ record of obstructive and harassing behavior, both challenged provisions were necessary to serve the significant government interests in medical safety, public safety, and access to abortions. The Supreme Court upheld these provisions on appeal.

In February 1996, the Justice Department filed its brief in *Olson & Unterburger v United States* in the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals. Defendants, who are antiabortion activists, were convicted of violating the Access Act. The DOJ is arguing that the Access Act is consistent with the First Amendment and that Congress had the power to enact the statute.

- ◆ **Female Genital Mutilation.** Effective April 1997 the performance of female genital mutilation in the United States on girls under the age of 18 is illegal.

Assistance to States in Developing Programs to Come into Compliance with Federal Legislation. The DOJ Office of Policy Development has been providing extensive technical and drafting assistance to states attempting to develop state programs that comply with the Jacob Wetterling Act, Megan's Law, and the Pam Lyncher Act, as well as the Full Faith and Credit provision of the Violence Against Women Act. The Department of Justice has provided assistance to states on Stalking and Similar Crimes Evidence Rule Legislation .

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

S*T*O*P Grants. The Services*Training*Officers*Prosecutors Violence Against Women Act grant program, announced in March 1995, authorizes funding for states, territories, and tribes to:

- Train law enforcement officers.
 - Expand the number of personnel in law enforcement and prosecution services to target violence against women.
 - Develop more effective policies, protocols, orders and services to prevent violent crimes against women.
 - Apply advanced technology to improve communications and data collection systems to identify and track arrests, protection, and prosecution.
 - Develop and enhance victim services programs (including domestic violence shelters).
- ◆ **Awarding of Grants.** In January 1996, the Department of Justice announced the awarding of \$426,000 in FY 1995 grant funding to each state and territory to assist police, prosecutors, and victim service providers in combating domestic violence and sexual assault. Additional grants of \$75,000 each were awarded to 14 Indian tribes. An additional \$130 million for FY 1996 was awarded to all but seven states and territories by September 30, 1996. These grants are administered by the Violence Against Women Grants Office of the Office of Justice Programs.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO GRANTEEES

Grantees Conference. In July 1995, the DOJ held the first Violence Against Women Act Grantees Conference, attended by representatives from all 50 states.

Assistance to Indian tribes. In FY 1995, the DOJ Office of Policy Development provided technical assistance to Indian tribe grantees: a meeting for tribal representatives provided a historical review of domestic violence and the impact of domestic violence and sexual assault in American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

- ◆ **Technical Assistance.** In FY 1996 DOJ provided technical assistance on effective prosecution protocols for sexual assault and domestic violence cases and the development of tribal codes addressing violence against Indian women.

Tribal Courts Project. The DOJ's Office of Policy Development created the Tribal Courts project to assist in the development and strengthening of tribal courts as institutions of self-government. In cooperation with the Office of Tribal Justice, the Tribal Courts Project emphasizes tribal judicial response to family violence and child sexual abuse cases. To this end, the Department has coordinated with the Federal Judicial Center to develop a joint training on the adjudication of child sexual abuse in Indian country for federal and tribal judges. The Project continues to cooperate with the Federal Judicial Center, the National Judicial College, and the national Indian Justice Center to provide training to tribal judges on the issue of family violence.

The Office of Tribal Justice and the Violence Against Women grants office have coordinated the administration of STOP Violence Against Indian Women grants in Indian country. With tribal courts among the grant recipients, tribes have used DOJ funding to raise consciousness in Indian communities about domestic and family violence, enact mandatory arrest policies, and develop mechanisms for inter-tribal sharing of information on protection and restraining orders.

Recognizing a gap in law enforcement on Indian reservations, the Department has also implemented measures to address violent crime in Indian country as well as misdemeanor crimes committed by non-Indians, over whom tribal courts lack jurisdiction. Criminal domestic violence and stalking statutes recognize conduct in Indian country as punishable.

- ❖ **Future Technical Assistance to Grantees.** DOJ's Office of Justice Programs plans to do the following:

- Support four regional meetings addressing issues of particular interest to state grantees and subgrantees.
- Cosponsor, with the National District Attorneys' Association, a series of regional workshops for S*T*O*P subgrantees on effective prosecution strategies for domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking cases.
- Collaborate with DOJ's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office and the Police Executive Research Forum to provide leadership development to Chiefs of Police and other commanding officers on prevention of violence against women.
- Continue to facilitate the implementation of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) on Indian lands, including:
 - efforts to insure the enforcement of the VAWA's "full faith and credit" provision;
 - movement toward eradication of child abuse on tribal reservations;
 - further exploration of avenues for increasing victim advocacy and other types of domestic violence outreach on tribal lands.

- ◆ **Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies.** The Department of Justice's Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies helps states, localities and tribal governments treat domestic violence as a serious criminal offense. This program recognizes that for mandatory arrest to be a fully effective intervention, it must be part of a coordinated, integrated criminal justice response to domestic violence with consistent follow-through by victim service providers, prosecutors, and judges. Congress appropriated \$28 million for the grants, and they were awarded by September 30, 1996. They are administered by the Violence Against Women Grants Office of the Office of Justice Programs.
- ◆ **Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Enforcement Grants.** In FY 1996, \$7 million in grants were awarded to encourage development of collaborative efforts, creation of training programs for "front-line" agencies and personnel (such as law enforcement personnel, shelter workers, health care providers, and clergy), creation of public awareness and community education campaigns, and expansion of direct services for rural and Native American victims and their children. Grantees included a variety of entities, including states, tribal, and local governments as well as public and private organizations in rural states.
- ◆ **Community Policing to Combat Domestic Violence Grants.** As part of the Crime Control Act of 1994, the Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) works to place an additional 100,000 law enforcement officers on the street and promote community policing.

In addition, in September 1995 the COPS Office announced the Community Policing to Combat Domestic Violence Grant Program, with initial grants based on FY 1995 funds. The program enables law enforcement agencies to execute well-planned, innovative strategies employing community policing to combat domestic violence. To be eligible for funding, police departments and sheriffs' offices must partner with non-profit, non-governmental victim service programs, domestic violence shelters, or community service groups to coordinate efforts to fight domestic abuse. Over 700 agencies applied for assistance, and in June 1996 the COPS Office announced that \$46 million would be awarded to 336 police departments.

- ◆ **National Stalker and Domestic Violence Reduction Grants.** Under the National Stalker and Domestic Violence Reduction Program, the Justice Department awarded \$1.5 million in FY 1996 to assist states in improving the processes for entering data regarding stalking and domestic violence into local, state, and national crime information databases. The DOJ Bureau of Justice Statistics administers the grants.

Street-Level Enforcement of Protective Orders. The Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Police Services (COPS) and the Office for Victims of Crime, has awarded \$220,000 to the Kentucky Justice Cabinet for a regional pilot project to test interstate and intrastate verification systems for facilitating the street-level enforcement of protection orders.

Witness Protection Program. The DOJ Violence Against Women Office is working with the Witness Protection Program to develop ways to aid battered women in need of new identities and relocation to a new area.

Requests for Executive Clemency. Occasionally, female petitioners for executive clemency premise requests for pardon or sentence commutation in whole or part upon claims of abuse or overbearing by male partners. The DOJ considers such factors along with other relevant information in its analysis of a case's circumstances when formulating recommendations for action by the President of the United States.

Rules of Evidence. The DOJ has assisted in the enactment of an evidentiary rule in California similar to Rules 413-15 of the Federal Rules of Evidence. Rules 413-15, part of implementation of the Crime Control Act of 1994, broaden the admissibility of evidence in sexual assault and child molestation cases when the defendant has committed offenses of the same type on other occasions. Future work will include continued use of the new rules in federal sex offense cases as well as assisting relevant law reform efforts in other states.

- ❖ The DOJ Office for Victims of Crime is funding the development of a training curriculum and four regional training seminars for attorneys and domestic violence advocates on the legislation and related considerations. A \$75,000 grant for this purpose was awarded in FY 1996, and an additional \$75,000 will be awarded in FY 1997.
- ◆ **Confidentiality.** The Department of Justice has submitted a report to Congress concerning the confidentiality of communications between a sexual assault or domestic violence victim and a counselor. The report identifies the different types of state statutes addressing this issue of confidentiality and lays out model legislation.

Prohibiting Firearms Possession by Certain People. The Department of Justice Office of Policy Development provides legal and policy guidance regarding a provision of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 which bars firearms possession by people subject to certain restraining orders. OPD also provides guidance regarding the Lautenberg Law, which prohibits anyone who has ever been convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence from possessing a firearm.

In addition, the 1993 Brady Bill's interim provisions regarding restrictions on handgun purchases will be replaced by an instant check system, the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, in November 1997. The Department has provided approximately \$112 million to the states for upgrading their criminal history records so states will be able to contribute accurate and useful information to the NICS.

DNA Research. The Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Chemical Science and Technology Laboratory is conducting research in the area of DNA measurement and the standards used to ensure that DNA measurements used by the judicial system and law enforcement are accurate. Two areas of applicability to women are paternity determination and identification of rapists.

- ◆ **Resource Clearinghouse.** In December 1995, the Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs entered into a cooperative agreement with the Battered Women's Justice Project to support development of a resource clearinghouse and implementation tools. The clearinghouse is up and running and provides valuable assistance and

information about how states are handling implementation of the full faith and credit provision requiring states to honor protection orders issued by other jurisdictions. The BWJP, in conjunction with the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, sponsored a workshop on full faith and credit in June 1996 in Louisville, Kentucky.

- ❖ **Future Plans.** The DOJ will work with the BWJP to coordinate its clearinghouse with other resources and develop possible models for standardized forms, policies, or mechanisms to assist courts, law enforcement, state legislatures, and advocates in implementing the full faith and credit provision.

SERVICES

- ◆ **National Domestic Violence Hotline.** In February 1996, the President announced the opening of the 24-hour, toll-free National Domestic Violence Hotline to provide crisis assistance and local shelter referrals to victims of domestic violence throughout the country. The Hotline was funded through a Health and Human Services grant to the Texas Council on Family Violence. The hotline number is 1-800-799-SAFE; the TDD number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-787-3224.
- ◆ **S*T*O*P Grants.** [See the discussion of these grants under “Law Enforcement and the Criminal Justice System” above.]
- ◆ **Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Grants.** [See the discussion under “Law Enforcement and the Criminal Justice System” above.]

HHS Grants under the Violence Against Women Act. Department of Health and Human Services programs under VAWA include grants for:

- battered women’s shelters;
- coordinated community responses to prevent intimate partner violence.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). HHS is conducting outreach within the U.S. to affected communities to educate the public about health issues associated with FGM.

Food Assistance. The Department of Agriculture has made Food Stamp benefits available to women driven from their homes due to domestic violence. Battered women and their children are able to participate in the Food Stamp program while residing in shelters for battered women, even though they may have been issued Food Stamps as part of their former household. The USDA also authorizes shelters for battered women to redeem Food Stamp coupons directly through wholesalers.

The USDA administers child nutrition programs so as to permit participation by children in battered women’s and homeless shelters. The Homeless Children Nutrition Program provides reimbursement for meals served to children under the age of 6 in emergency shelters. Over one-third of the shelters that participated in this program in 1995 were shelters for victims of domestic violence and their children.

Families at Risk. The \$240 million Family Preservation and Support Program, created in 1994 and administered by HHS, helps states and communities reduce abuse and neglect by serving families at risk or in crisis.

- ❖ The Department of Justice will study the feasibility of directing funding to family advocacy centers, which attempt to respond comprehensively to the different problems and needs which arise in abusive homes, e.g., child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, batterer treatment, and foster care and prevention programs for children.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

HHS Grants. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) programs under VAWA include:

- education and prevention grants to reduce sexual assault against women;
- grants to develop educational model curricula.
- ◆ **Community Checklist.** The Advisory Council on Violence Against Women was created in July 1995, and is co-chaired by the Attorney General and HHS Secretary and made up of 47 experts — representatives from law enforcement, media, business, health and social services, victim advocacy, and survivors. Seven subgroups then made recommendations focusing on heightening public awareness about violence against women and encouraging education for those who interact with victims and perpetrators of violence against women. The Council published *A Community Checklist: Important Steps Communities Can Take to End Violence Against Women* in October 1996.

SEX DISCRIMINATION

Recipients of Federal Financial Assistance. The Department of Justice Civil Rights Division investigates complaints of sex discrimination by recipients of DOJ financial assistance. The majority of these recipients are law enforcement agencies.

Involuntary Servitude and Slavery, Sexual Assault by Police Officers and Correctional Officers. The Department of Justice has obtained convictions in civil rights prosecutions against police and correctional officers for involuntary servitude and slavery, sexual assault and violent interference with reproductive health services in cases in which the victims were women. The DOJ will continue to investigate allegations and prosecute crimes when the evidence is sufficient.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual Harassment by Male Landlords against Female Tenants. The Department of Justice Civil Rights Division enforces the Fair Housing Act, which prohibits discrimination in housing based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, and family status. Most of the sex discrimination cases have involved sexual harassment by male landlords against female tenants.

For example, in December 1994, the DOJ entered into a \$180,000 settlement against a Chicago landlord and his son, who own and operate an apartment building. The U.S. was prepared to prove in court that the defendants sexually harassed six female tenants. In addition to having to pay damages, the defendants were required to sell the building and prohibited from managing any apartment building for at least four years.

In another major sexual harassment case, the Justice Department accused the owner and manager of numerous rental properties in the Mississippi Delta of sexually harassing female tenants, resulting in a “hostile environment” and significantly burdening the women’s tenancy. The case was settled in January 1995, with the owner precluded from managing any rental property in the future and required to pay monetary damages to the 19 victims.

Sexual Harassment in Prisons. The DOJ Bureau of Prisons stringently enforces policies and procedures that control the level of violence in its institutions. The BOP also enforces a strong policy against sexual harassment in the workplace and provides annual training to all staff.

VIOLENCE AGAINST INSTITUTIONALIZED PERSONS

As authorized by the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act (CRIPA), the Department of Justice addresses cases of alleged staff abuse resulting in death or injury, as well as deficient suicide prevention practices, in juvenile detention facilities, jails, and mental health facilities. Many cases which the DOJ has investigated have involved allegations of physical abuse of female detainees by staff. In addition to issuing general injunctions to prevent or eliminate abuse and requiring prompt, thorough investigations, the DOJ has required female personnel to be on staff in all jails housing female inmates, addressed privacy rights of and alleged sexual misconduct by guards against female inmates in correctional facilities, and otherwise sought to protect women. Activities in Michigan, Arizona, and Mississippi have specifically focused on these issues. The majority of consent decrees entered pursuant to CRIPA mandate appropriate training for staff to ensure that they function appropriately.

VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Violence in the workplace is the leading cause of death for women at work. The majority of female homicide victims are employed in the retail trade and service industries. In response, the Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has developed two sets of guidelines for the prevention of workplace violence:

- ◆ **Health Care and Social Service Industries.** OSHA released guidelines for the prevention of workplace violence for health care and social service workers in March 1996. Subsequently OSHA has worked in partnership with the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, the National Safety Council and other concerned organizations to provide training and disseminate the guidelines.
- ❖ **Night Retail Industry.** OSHA has scheduled finalized guidelines for the prevention of workplace violence for the night retail industry in 1997. This is a voluntary incentive

program, and, where adopted, it will have a high positive impact on the safety and health of women in this industry. OSHA will conduct outreach and education efforts to assist employers in protecting their establishments from violence.

VIOLENCE PREVENTION IN SCHOOLS

The Department of Education has taken the following actions to prevent violence in schools:

- **Safe and Drug Free Schools Grants.** The grants support research and development of elementary and secondary school activities to address sexual harassment, among other issues
- **Guidance on Sexual Harassment.** Guidelines addressing sexual harassment by school employees, other students and third parties were issued in March, 1997. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sexual harassment.
- **Manual on School Uniforms.** The Manual on School Uniforms, published in 1996, identifies local communities that have adopted school uniform policies and describes how uniforms have increased safety for students. It also includes model school uniform policies and a users' guide to adopting a policy. The Manual is available on the ED Internet web site at <http://www.ed.gov/>
- **Enforcement of the Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act.** This 1990 Act allows college students and prospective students access to information about crime rates on college campuses of schools participating in Title IV programs.

The Department of Education future initiatives:

- ❖ **Campaign to prevent violence.** The Department of Education will carry out a campaign at the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education levels to address violence, including physical violence, rape (including date rape), assault, sexual harassment (including peer harassment), and other forms of illegal behavior such as violating gun, liquor, and drug laws.

The campaign will be implemented through partnering with federal and state agencies to educate school-age youth, teachers, and others regarding laws and the devastating effects of violence; and by making available information on effective programs for prevention, early intervention, and treatment where appropriate. The ED will ask schools to inform employees and students of institutional policies and penalties for violations, and, as appropriate, provide employees with training about the prohibition of violence, including sexual harassment, in schools. The ED will also explore recruiting public figures and celebrities with wide appeal to girls and young women ages 8-18 to create a series of short public service announcements. The ED will encourage parent participation in schools and encourage business and community involvement.

- ❖ **Alternatives to violent influences.** The ED will encourage schools and communities to establish and promote alternatives to violent influences, such as the school band or orchestra, clubs, student government, and sports. ED will also encourage schools and

communities to hold public forums on violence and sexual harassment and organize peer support programs to help youths feel a sense of belonging, develop self-esteem, and learn to deal with difficult situations such as resisting negative peer pressure.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

U.S. policy is to work in collaboration with community organizations and governments that are committed to eradicating this harmful practice. The State Department chairs an intergovernmental agency working group on female genital mutilation. This group, with representatives from the Departments of Treasury, Health and Human Services, USAID, and USIA meets regularly to discuss strategy and policy and address U.S. legislation on FGM. The State Department develops country profiles on the practice of FGM for asylum adjudicators and also funds non-governmental activity aimed at alleviating the health complications that arise from the practice.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AS EMPLOYER

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS:

Since 1994, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has utilized several approaches to develop high-quality workplace violence prevention programs throughout the federal government:

- **Interagency Working Group.** The Interagency Working Group on Violence in the Workplace brings together a wide range of professional expertise and experience and has developed models and procedures for workplace violence program development. The Working Group members has presented their findings to a variety of professional and governmental organizations.
- **Seminars.** OPM has organized a variety of seminars at which agencies share their successes and problems in an informal, cooperative format.
- ◆ **Electronic Dissemination of Information.** A compendium of guidance from the Working Group is available on OPM ONLINE, OPM's electronic bulletin board, reachable by computer and modem at (202)606-4800. It provides tools for analyzing an organization's needs, organizing a response, and building on lessons learned in other settings.
- ◆ **Manager's Handbook.** The manager's handbook provides simple, easily accessible guidance on such issues as how to develop a local workplace violence plan and how to support employees in a variety of traumatic situations. The issue of domestic violence spillover in the workplace is given explicit attention.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PROGRAMS:

The DoD's integrated approach to violence includes:

- Training in conflict management.

- Financial management training.
- Premarital and marital counseling.
- Stress management training.
- New Parent Support Program.
- Parent Education Groups.
- Alcohol abuse prevention.

DoD, the country's largest employer, has taken the following actions:

- **Victims and Witness Assistance Program.** DoD has initiated a comprehensive victim/witness assistance program that provides for notification to all victims of their rights and assistance available at each stage of the criminal justice process. The governing directive requires that particular attention be paid to victims of serious, violent crimes, including child abuse, domestic violence, and sexual misconduct. Several DoD-wide training sessions have been held, in cooperation with the Department of Justice, to ensure vigorous implementation.

The DoD Victim and Witness Assistance Council provides a liaison with the Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime and a forum for the exchange of information and consideration of victim and witness policies.

- ◆ **Conferences on Family Violence.** DoD hosted its first conference on spouse abuse in July 1996. The Military Services presented their prevention, intervention, and treatment approaches and their research and evaluation findings. Attendees from the Departments of Justice, Health and Human Services, the Services, academia, and non-profit organizations submitted recommendations for DoD and Services review. At a second conference in February 1997, participants reviewed DoD policy and approaches to preventing spouse abuse and intervening and providing treatment when abuse occurs.

Commander's Desk Guide. The Army distributes a Commander's Desk Guide to ensure that commanders are aware of the nature of spouse and child abuse and means of prevention; Family Advocacy Program policies, procedures, and services; and command responsibilities for identification of incidents, with mandatory reporting and subsequent coordination with the Family Advocacy Case Management Team.

Community Needs Assessment. The Air Force conducts an annual community needs assessment through a Family Advocacy Outreach Program Management Team.

Education. DoD's efforts to increase public awareness of spouse battering and abuse has resulted in increased numbers of victim self-reports.

Multi-Disciplinary Coordinated Community Response. The Marine Corps has implemented a multi-disciplinary "Coordinated Community Response" to violence against women. Senior leadership heads prevention and intervention efforts.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE PROGRAMS

- **Rape Awareness Program.** Designed to educate foreign service personnel and their dependents about the crime of rape, this comprehensive course deals with common misconceptions, the emotional trauma suffered by the victim, their medical needs, legal resource and most importantly, personal safety issues. The emphasis is on reducing participants' vulnerability to assault. This course is offered to overseas posts where crime ratings are high or critical, to participants in the Security Overseas Seminar, to all Regional Security Officers (RSOs) going overseas and to some Peace Corps volunteers. An affiliated course, *Coping with Victims of Crime* is also offered to RSOs and Consular Officers going overseas. It is designed to create sensitivity in handling crime victims who seek assistance while traveling or visiting an overseas country.
- ❖ **Child Abuse and Sexual Molestation.** This will consist of a seminar to be given overseas to assaults with an emphasis on detecting the signs of child abuse or molestation in their children.

IMMIGRATION AND REQUESTS FOR POLITICAL ASYLUM

- ❖ **Coercive Family Planning Practices.** The Immigration and Naturalization Service is implementing a new law which provides that a person who has been forced to abort a pregnancy or to undergo involuntary sterilization, or who has been persecuted for failure or refusal to undergo such a procedure or for other resistance to a coercive population control program, shall be deemed to have been persecuted on account of a political opinion for purposes of granting asylum. This law replaces INS's program for special administrative review of claims by nationals of the People's Republic of China involving coercive family planning.
- ◆ **Self-Petition of Battered Spouses and Children.** As mandated by the Violence Against Women Act in 1994, the INS published an interim rule in May 1996 allowing battered spouses and children of citizens or legal permanent residents to self-petition to become legal permanent residents themselves. Under this new procedure, family members who would otherwise be eligible for permanent residency will no longer be forced to rely on an abuser to remain in the United States. INS will implement its newly published interim rule and review the comments it receives. INS has announced that it will centralize the filing of all self-petitions in its Vermont Service Center in order to ensure that these petitions are reviewed expeditiously by experienced senior INS personnel.
- ◆ **Asylum Gender Guidelines and Training.** In May 1995, INS issued Asylum Gender Guidelines providing Asylum Officers with substantive guidance on principles of American asylum law that bear on gender-related cases such as domestic and sexual abuse. The Guidelines do not enlarge or expand the grounds for asylum under current law. They address procedural matters such as the desirability of having female interviewers and interpreters, when available, and the need to provide for interviews outside the hearing of other family members, especially male relatives and children.

Also, every INS Asylum Officer now receives four hours of specialized training on asylum claims involving gender-related violence.

- ◆ **Fear of Female Genital Mutilation as Basis for Asylum.** INS urged the Board of Immigration Appeals to recognize that, in some cases, fear of being subjected to female genital mutilation (FGM) may be a basis for asylum.
- ◆ In June 1996, the BIA issued a precedent-setting decision that FGM may be a basis for asylum.
- ❖ Subject to the BIA's ruling, INS will recognize that certain potential victims of FGM may establish eligibility for asylum and withholding of deportation.
- ◆ **Disability and Naturalization.** On March 19, 1997 the INS published a final rule that implements congressionally mandated exceptions from the English and Civics requirements for naturalization for persons with disabilities that prevent them from meeting such requirements.

INTERNATIONAL AID PROGRAMS

The Agency for International Development has the goal of reducing all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence and female genital mutilation. In addition to the specific programs mentioned below, efforts are underway in East Asia and the Pacific to address domestic violence and discrimination against women in the workplace.

- **Domestic Violence.** The DHS (Demographic and Health Surveys) has developed a "Women's Status Module" which includes a sub-module on domestic violence. As the survey has been completed in several countries throughout the world, women often cite their main concern as domestic violence.

India. USAID/India has included domestic violence as one component of its Women's Initiative (WIN). A three-year study will document the nature and extent of domestic violence in selected regions. This report, which will be updated on a regular basis, will serve as an advocacy tool for women's NGOs as well as provide much-needed information that the Government of India can use in addressing the issue.

Russia. Russian Lawyers Advocacy Project. Working with women's crisis centers in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Murmansk, and Saratov, the project will educate lawyers on laws and using the legal system to combat violence.

Mexico. The Violence Against Women in Intimate Relationships project will design a program of formative research that will be followed by the design, implementation and evaluation of a community-based strategy. The results of this project will be distributed to influential members of the Mexican Ministries of Health and Education, and will incorporate the new educational strategies into IMIFAP's family life and sex education programs.

Peru. USAID/Peru supports the Ombudsman Office for Women to undertake a national study on the nature and incidence of domestic violence, and funds local NGO

efforts to disseminate information on the 1993 domestic violence law as well as assist battered women temporarily living in shelters. A parallel effort assists women's groups to address this problem through self-esteem workshops, income generation activities, and training local health workers to increase their awareness. Efforts are also underway to conduct awareness campaigns at the regional and national level.

Female Genital Mutilation. During FY 1994 and 1995, USAID committed nearly \$1.5 million to efforts to eliminate female genital mutilation. Projects are underway in Kenya, Egypt, Mali, and Guinea. RAINBO, an organization recognized as one of the leaders in female genital mutilation technical expertise, is writing the USAID Strategy toward the elimination of female genital mutilation. An Intra-Agency Female Genital Mutilation working group is actively highlighting this issue throughout other programming areas of USAID.

New USAID initiatives:

- ❖ **Expand Health and Legal Rights Programs.** In the next several years, USAID will expand the number of health and legal rights programs through which violence against women and female genital mutilation can be addressed.

D. 2. Study the causes and consequences of violence against women and the effectiveness of preventive measures.

The Advisory Council on Violence Against Women, created in 1995, co-chaired by Attorney General Janet Reno and Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala consists of 46 experts from law enforcement, media, health and social services, victim advocacy and survivors working together to prevent violence against women. Through this Council a Community Guide to assist communities in addressing domestic violence was developed and distributed widely.

HHS INITIATIVES

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR PLANNING AND EVALUATION (ASPE):

Studies. Studies include the cost of domestic violence to the health care system, development of community based domestic violence programs, and an exploratory study of child welfare and domestic violence.

Training Conference. In October 1996, ASPE, in coordination with the American Medical Association, American Bar Association, and DHHS agencies, held a conference to train multi-disciplinary teams of 350 professionals who work in family violence.

Administration on Aging (ADA). ADA addressees violence against the elderly. As part of its Crime/Violence Prevention Initiative, it has funded six projects which link state and community domestic violence programs with aging programs. It is jointly funding a study with the ACF, by

the National Center on Elder Abuse, which will examine the incidence of elder abuse, neglect, and describe the characteristics of victims.

Agency for Health Care Policy and Research (AHCPR). A study of the effectiveness of team training for primary care providers in the identification and management of domestic violence is being funded by AHCPR. Domestic violence identification — outcomes and effectiveness and the impact of violence on the outcomes of their pregnancies are additional studies that are ongoing.

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC)

Research and Demonstration Projects. Injuries are a leading cause of death for women in the U.S. The CDC's projects include research and demonstration on injuries, both intentional and unintentional as well as violence. CDC supports activities for the prevention of family violence, sexual assault, abuse of older women, workplace violence, health communications activities to promote public awareness, and training programs for health care providers.

Guide for Communities. Following the co-sponsorship of the AMA Conference on Family Violence: Health and Justice, CDC is developing a guide for communities to address prevention, resource development, community responses, program planning and creation of successful models.

ADDITIONAL CDC STUDIES

- Comparison of the use and costs of the medical care system by women who are identified as abused and those who are not abused.
- Evaluation of training programs for health care professionals.
- Establishment of uniform definition of violence against women.
- Evaluation of a community-based project addressing date violence in North Carolina.
- Extramural research grants to identify risk factors associated with family and intimate violence.
- An inventory of surveillance systems.
- A project on informative communications research to determine attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of inner city youth concerning relationships and dating violence.
- Projects to identify successful delivery of violence interventions.
- A study on the characteristics and assessment of family violence interventions.
- Development of a research agenda on the understanding and control of violence against women.

ADDITIONAL CDC INITIATIVES

- A national awareness campaign.
- Development of a newsletter to enhance communications.

- Development of a violence against women module to be included in the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring system.
- An intramural study to identify risk factors for escalation of violence and protective factors for cessation of violence within partner relationships.
- Migrant farm workers women's training project.
- Sexual assault prevention projects.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The FDA is involved in promoting the development of female controlled products to reduce the risk of pregnancy, STDs, and HIV/AIDS as a consequences of rape and forced sex.

Health Care and Financing Administration (HCFA). In conjunction with the Interagency Women's Health Task Force, HDFA is involved in projects to educate health care providers to recognize victims of domestic violence and ensure that they are aware of community resources.

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). HRSA is formulating a plan of action to respond to family and intimate violence issues. Other projects include linking communities through a national network to enhance their community response; support of grants to train health care workers to recognize and intervene appropriately in cases of domestic violence; training of women migrant farm workers; and rural outreach projects to target families at high risk for domestic violence, including the recruitment of lay health workers to work directly with pregnant women and new mothers at high risk for violence.

Indian Health Service (IHS). In the past two years the IHS has renewed emphasis on women's issues to include health provider education for the identification of victims of domestic violence, referral and follow-up, and education of tribal leaders.

The National Institutes of Health has violence research initiatives through several of its Institutes:

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism has a multi-disciplinary research program on alcohol and violence. It is currently studying men and women with a history of inflicting physical abuse to provide a basis for the development of prevention strategies, and supports research examining the reciprocal relationship between the effects of alcohol and family violence.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) is involved in a study of victimization, trauma from natural causes as well as study of female drug users as perpetrators. It coordinates a NIDA wide violence workgroup.

The National Center for Research Response has an ongoing protocol at the University of New Mexico to study women with chronic pelvic pain, comparing age and race matched controls with regard to their histories of abuse.

The National Institute of Mental Health Research is supporting research on the psychological and biological effects of violence and trauma on developmental trajectories, on later interpersonal relationships and on mental outcomes.

The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute is supporting research on biological mechanisms through which hostility and harassment contribute to increased risk of coronary disease in women.

The National Institute on Aging is participating in a trans-NIH request for proposals to sponsor research on factors that enhance or mitigate the potential abuse or neglect of older women.

The Office of Research on Women's Health co-funds new programs on interventions for battered women and children to reduce the cycle of violence, domestic abuse among Latina women in the cultural context, interventions for older women abuse by their family members, partner violence and alcohol use as factors leading to violence among Native Americans.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Through the National Women's Resource Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Alcohol, Tobacco, and other Drug Abuse and Mental Illness, SAMHSA supports several projects including the Community Team Training Institute; the Curriculum on Violence against Women; a technical expert group which focuses on women, violence and mental health issues; and the development of a Women's Mental Health Consumer Guide which will include violence.

Other initiatives include an information and referral line which provides specific information on violence; fact sheet on physical and sexual abuse in the lives of women; public information campaign; national clearinghouse for alcohol and drug information which is the central national resource for the latest information on all aspects of substance abuse, including significant information on violence against women; substance abuse prevention demonstration project targeting high risk young females, including those who have experienced abuse and are at risk for violence; and the residential treatment for pregnant and postpartum women.

DEPARTMENTS OF AGRICULTURE AND DEFENSE INITIATIVE

The Department of Agriculture and the Air Force are collaborating on a research project on domestic violence prevention. Phase one of the project is a literature review focusing on six specific issues related to domestic violence. Phase two will examine the implications of the literature review's results for practitioners in family violence prevention. Air Force and USDA Cooperative Extension faculty will collaborate to produce a report of the findings for electronic publication as well as develop training packages for distribution to USDA Extension and Air Force personnel. USDA hopes to continue the association with Air Force on other gender-related research topics.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PROGRAMS

- **Self-Assessment Tool.** The DoD Office of Family Policy published the *Family Advocacy Program Standards and Self-Assessment Tool* to provide specific objectives and a method of assessment for use at the defense installation level. The standards address all aspects of the DoD Family Advocacy Program including preventive services and program evaluation.
- **Risk Assessment Matrix.** The Navy Family Advocacy Program has developed a risk assessment matrix and handbook for use in child neglect and child or spouse abuse cases. This model is currently undergoing worldwide pilot testing at eight sites. Use of the matrix assesses the severity of the incident, the risk of future harm, and attempts to identify families in need of service.

DOD STUDIES OF SPOUSE AND CHILD ABUSE:

- Published in 1994, *The Abuse Victims Study* provided demographic characteristics of victims and perpetrators, extent of abuse, disincentives to report abuse, and assistance available through the Family Advocacy Program services.
- ◆ *The Study of Spousal Abuse Involving Members of the Armed Forces* was published in 1996. This study describes the possible causes of spouse abuse within the military population, the existing procedures for responding to incidents of spousal abuse, the effectiveness of those procedures, a review of programs for curtailing spouse abuse, and a proposal for a prevention program for the entire Armed Forces.
- Navy research identifies young men and women predisposed to violence and is developing preventive measures training at accession.
- DoD research revealed that the majority of abuse offenders are enlisted males. DoD is applying this information toward improving preventive and educational efforts focusing on this group of potential abusers.
- **Evaluations of the New Parent Support Program.** The DoD New Parent Support program provides prenatal support, counseling, and home visits after birth to both the mother and father of families at risk for spouse and child abuse. Preliminary evaluations indicate that it aids in the reduction of both spouse and child abuse.

D. 3. Eliminate trafficking in women and assist victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Federal law prohibits the trafficking of anyone across state or national borders for the purpose of prostitution or other criminal sexual activity, such as the molestation of a minor. In addition, the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act prohibits the travel across state or national borders for purposes of prostitution or other criminal activity. This statute covers sex tourism.

Youth Prostitution Initiative. The Department of Justice Child Protection Initiative includes the Youth Prostitution Initiative through which CEOS (Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section) is coordinating efforts to address youth prostitution. CEOS is assisting in coordinating a national network on youth prostitution. The goal is to track the activities of traffickers and follow through on prosecutions. CEOS is also involved in the network's outreach services to victims of traffickers and sex travelers, and to assist girls in leaving prostitution and provide rehabilitation services. Multiagency multijurisdictional task forces are being established in several jurisdictions under this project. In addition, several cases of organizers who brought foreign women into the U.S. for purposes of prostitution are being worked. CEOS is also working with FBI Legal Attaches in several countries and with the State Department to review potential cases for prosecution under the sex tourism statute. CEOS is also represented on the Interpol Standing Working Party on Offenses Against Children.

- ❖ **Training Conference.** To enhance law enforcement, prosecution, and victim outreach, CEOS is coordinating the First National Training Conference on Youth Prostitution in June 1997 in Lincoln, Nebraska.
- ◆ **World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.** The Departments of Justice, State, Defense, and Labor, the U.S. Customs Service, and the President's Interagency Council on Women participated in the first World Congress Against the Sexual Exploitation of Children, held in August 1996 in Stockholm, Sweden. The Department of Justice was the lead agency for the U.S. delegation. The Congress aimed to combat the commercial exploitation of children — focusing on child prostitution, the trafficking and sale of children for sexual purposes, and child pornography.
- ◆ **Interagency Working Group.** The U.S. delegation to the World Congress, under the leadership of the Justice Department, has continued to meet regularly to explore ways to develop policy, and coordinate in enforcement and policy implementation. It has also met with the NGO community.
- ◆ **Military Services Program.** The Department of Defense has issued programmatic steps to be included in training programs and requires Military Services to carry out a program that underscores the DoD's commitment to combating the child prostitution industry and ensuring that no DoD personnel knowingly or unknowingly support such activity.
- ◆ **US-Russia Seminar.** As part of an ongoing anti-crime training and technical assistance program, the State Department hosted a joint US-Russia seminar for Russian judges and other criminal justice officials on "Combating the Sexual Exploitation of Women and Children: Investigation, Judicial Concern, and Organized Crime," in Washington, D.C. in April 1997.
- ◆ **Migration.** The Intergovernmental Council on Migration, which includes U.S., European and Canadian representatives, identified trafficking of women and girls as a priority issue when the U.S. took leadership of this council in March 1997.

On an ongoing basis the U.S. participates in bilateral, regional and multilateral initiatives to protect the rights of all migrants and to help deter trafficking in persons. It urges major source and transit countries to enact laws against alien smuggling; ensures that the rights of all migrants, regardless of status, are respected; revokes or denies U.S. visas to individuals involved in alien smuggling. The State Department sponsors training in immigration, international document fraud and alien smuggling.

INTERNATIONAL AID PROGRAMS

- ◆ **USAID Project on Sex Trafficking in South Asia.** The Agency for International Development has the goal of reducing all forms of violence against women, including sex trafficking. To help implement this goal, USAID will begin a project in South Asia which addresses trafficking in women. In the next several years, USAID will expand the number of its health and legal rights programs through which violence against women can be addressed.
- ◆ In 1997, the Department of Labor's International Labor Affairs Bureau (ILAB) expects to provide support for two innovative programs which assist young girls at risk of being lured into prostitution. Both programs will enlist the support of a wide range of actors to combat child prostitution — NGOs, teachers, community organizations, and local, regional and national government officials.

[See L. 6 for further description of ILAB funded research and programs.]

E. Women and Armed Conflict



Platform for Action Strategic Objectives:

- E.1. Increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts or under foreign occupation.
- E.2. Reduce excessive military expenditures and control the availability of armaments.
- E.3. Promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations.
- E.4. Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace.
- E.5. Provide protection, assistance and training to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women.
- E.6. Provide assistance to women of the colonies and non-self-governing territories.

E.1. Increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts or under foreign occupation.

PEACEKEEPING

Women in the U.S. military services participate as military observers and in their peacekeeping units abroad in contingency operations.

As of August 1, 1996, approximately 11% of the U.S. forces deployed to the Bosnia peacekeeping mission were women.

- ◆ **War Tribunals.** U.S. government representatives have met with high level officials working for the war tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia to ensure that prosecutors are trained in issues of sexual violence against women. The U.S. is supporting a workshop for tribunal investigators and prosecutors on prosecuting cases of sexual violence.
- ◆ **Afghanistan.** When the Taliban took over Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, in the fall of 1996, restricting the movement and livelihoods of women and girls, the State Department incorporated specific issues affecting these women into its broader policymaking scheme on Afghanistan. The State Department is continuing to raise the issue of the treatment of women and girls with the Taliban representatives and took the lead in criticizing the Taliban's restrictions on women and girls during a late 1996 United Nations session.

[See discussion of the Department of Labor's guidelines for preventing violence in the workplace, and the Department of Education's programs to promote violence prevention in schools, under Strategic Objective D.1.]

E.2. Reduce excessive military expenditures and control the availability of armaments.

Arms reduction. Current downsizing efforts in the Department of Defense have resulted in a reduction in strategic arms and weapons systems. Careful analysis of threat assessments, strategies, and budgetary consideration have resulted in reduced expenditures.

Non-Proliferation. President Clinton reaffirmed on April 17, 1996 that the United States remains committed to the pursuit of systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goal of eliminating those weapons. U.S. diplomacy played a critical role in securing the indefinite and unconditional extension by consensus of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). The U.S. was the first country to sign this historic agreement on September 24, 1996. By banning all nuclear explosions, the treaty will constrain the development and qualitative improvement on nuclear weapons, as well as end the development of new types of nuclear weapons.

- ◆ **Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).** In April, 1997, the Senate gave its consent to ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention. This Convention bans an entire class of weapons of mass destruction.

Co-operative Threat Reduction Program of 1992. Through this program the U.S. has helped transport thousands of nuclear weapons from Belarus, Kazakstan, and Ukraine back to Russia; consolidate the number of sites within Russia where weapons are stored; improve basic security at some of the storage sites; help to build a new plutonium storage facility.

START I and II (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks). The START agreement signed in 1991 between the United States and the Soviet Union reduces each side's overall strategic nuclear forces by 30-40%, and the most threatening nuclear weapons systems by as much as 50%. Implementation of START I is running more than two years ahead of schedule. As of January 1996, all parties had already reduced their strategic forces below those limits that must be met by December 5, 1997.

The START II Treaty, which was ratified by the U.S. in 1996, is a follow-up treaty to START I and is designed to achieve further deep reductions in strategic nuclear forces and enhance strategic stability by eliminating destabilizing weapons systems. By the end of the START II reduction period, the United States' strategic nuclear arsenal will have been reduced by two-thirds of its Cold War levels. This treaty has not yet been ratified by Russia.

The U.S. continues to reduce its nuclear arsenal at a rate of 1,000-2,000 weapons per year, and thus far has dismantled more than 9,000 nuclear weapons. Since 1988, the U.S. has reduced its non-strategic nuclear force (NSNF) warheads by 90 percent.

SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks). The Talks resulted in the Antiballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty of 1972 that reduced the amount of funding expended on armaments and reduced the growth of the defense budget.

Military Base Closings. The Department of Justice Federal Programs Branch continues to defend challenges to the implementation of military base closures and realignment which are the result of various statutes that are designed to reduce military expenditures and convert bases and resources to peaceful purposes thereby permitting the allocation of additional funds for social and economic development.

International Arms Trafficking. The Department of Justice Federal Programs Branch defends challenges to U.S. controls on cryptographic software under the Arms Export Control Act and the International Traffic in Arms Regulations, which are designed to control the export of munitions in the interest of national security.

LANDMINES

- ◆ In May 1996, the United States embarked on an initiative to pursue aggressively an international agreement to ban the use, stockpiling, production, and transfer of anti-personnel landmines with a view to completing the negotiation as soon as possible. On December 10, 1996 the UN General Assembly voted 155-0 in favor of the U.S.-initiated resolution urging states to pursue an agreement to ban anti-personnel landmines.
- ◆ The U.S. has instituted a permanent ban on the export and transfer of anti-personnel landmines.
- ❖ The United States has committed to undertake unilaterally not to use, and to place in inactive stockpile status, any non-self-destructing anti-personnel landmines. The U.S. plans to destroy, by the end of 1999, about three million non-self-destructing anti-personnel landmines. Destruction of these mines is well underway — 320,000 mines have been destroyed, i.e. about 10% of the stockpile.

The U.S. has instituted a cap on its landmine stockpiles at the current level of inventory.

- ◆ The President has directed the Secretary of Defense to undertake a program of research, procurement, and other measures needed to permit both the United States and its allies to end reliance on anti-personnel landmines as soon as possible.
- ❖ The Department of Defense has undertaken a program to develop and improve landmine detection and clearing technology and will share this improved technology with the broader international community. Additionally, the Department will continue to expand its humanitarian demining program to train and assist other countries in developing effective demining programs. Significant reductions have already been made.

Conversion. The U.S. is funding projects through the International Science and Technology Center in Moscow and the Science and Technology Center in Ukraine to provide over 10,000 weapons scientists with civilian work.

E.3. Promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The United States Institute of Peace. Established in 1984, the Institute is mandated by Congress to strengthen the nation's capabilities to promote the peaceful resolution of international conflicts. It funds research and public education programs, conducts policy analysis and public outreach programs, brings together scholars and policymakers for discussion of research and studies, awards fellowships and scholarships, and develops conflict resolution training programs. In FY 1997 it received \$11.160 million, down from \$11.491 million in FY 1996. Currently the fifteen member board of directors includes three women.

Youth-Centered Conflict Resolution Program. This is a two-fold project of the Justice Department's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention:

Conflict Resolution Education: A Guide to Implementing Programs in Schools, Youth-Serving Organizations, Community and Juvenile Justice Settings. The Guide was developed in partnership with the Department of Education's Safe and Drug Free Schools Program and has been disseminated to thousands of schools across the country. It is a tool to help increase awareness of conflict resolution programs and to encourage their development.

Training and Technical Assistance. The Illinois Institute for Dispute Resolutions, a program of the Illinois Bar Association, provides training and technical assistance to schools, community youth service organizations, and juvenile facilities.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS

- ◆ **Peacekeeping.** The Department of Defense has made a significant commitment to peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina with its deployment of forces to enforce the Dayton Peace agreements.
- ◆ **War tribunals.** High level U.S. officials have met with their counterparts working for war tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia to make sure that prosecutors are trained in issues of sexual violence against women. The U.S. has agreed to support this training.

E.4. Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace.

E.5. Provide protection, assistance and training to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women.

Military members deployed in support of the Bosnia mission have the task of protecting refugees, particularly displaced women and children.

Protection and Assistance. The U.S. has worked closely with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) to establish policies and guidelines for protection and assistance to refugee women to meet their special needs (protection against sexual and physical abuse, against exploitation and against discrimination in the delivery of humanitarian supplies and services).

Reproductive Health. The U.S. participates in the UNHCR Interagency Working Group on Reproductive Health. It funded a symposium on reproductive health for refugees, from which emerged guidelines for addressing reproductive health considerations which are of heightened concern to refugee populations, especially because of sexual violence. The U.S. funded and provided a reproductive health coordinator at UNHCR headquarters who is managing the field testing of the guidelines.

Refugee Afghan Girls' Education. The U.S., through the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, has supported education programs to target Afghan girls in Pakistan, who otherwise would not have equal access to education.

- ◆ **Bosnian and Rwandan Women's Initiatives.** The Office of Population, Refugees and Migration of the Department of State has funded two projects in Bosnia and Rwanda to protect and advance the rights of women who have been torn from their homes, to provide them with access to reproductive health services and to help them start new businesses. These programs promote the reintegration of women into the economy through training programs, legal assistance, and support for microenterprise projects.

E.6. Provide assistance to the women of the colonies and non-self-governing territories.

The Department of Defense cooperates with the efforts to bring to justice those guilty of war crimes.

F. Women and the Economy



Platform for Action Strategic Objectives:

- F.1. Promote women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources.
- F.2. Facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade.
- F.3. Provide business services, training and access to markets, information and technology, particularly to low-income women.
- F.4. Strengthen women's economic capacity and commercial networks.
- F.5. Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination.
- E.6. Promote harmonization of work and family responsibilities for women and men.

F.1. Promote women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Social Security Benefits. Nearly every American — man, woman and child — has Social Security protection, either as a worker or as a dependent of a worker. The Social Security Administration has projected that about 145 million persons will work in Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance Program-covered employment or self-employment in 1997. About 96 out of 100 jobs in paid and self-employment are eligible for OASDI, which provides protection against loss of earnings due to retirement, death or

disability. During 1995, OASDI benefits amounting to \$332.6 billion were paid to retired and disabled workers and their families, and to survivors of deceased workers. The number of persons receiving monthly OASDI benefits at the end of December 1995 was 43.4 million.

When the program began in 1935, benefits were limited to retired or deceased workers and their families, and most workers were men. Today, nearly 60% of all women are in the nation's workforce. Although Social Security has always provided benefits for women, it has taken on added significance. Many women work, pay Social Security taxes, and earn credit towards a monthly income for their retirement. Women with children earn Social Security protection for themselves and their families. This could mean monthly benefits to a woman and her family if she becomes disabled and can no longer work. If she dies, her survivors may be eligible for benefits. Women who do not work outside the home are usually covered through their husband's work and can receive benefits when he retires, becomes disabled or dies.

Resources: "Social Security: What Every Woman Should Know" and other publications can be obtained by calling the SSA's toll-free number 1-800-772-1213, or through the Internet: <http://www.ssa.gov>

PROMOTING RETIREMENT SECURITY

Public Awareness Campaign. The Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration (PWBA) of the Department of Labor has found that the national savings rate has declined and that 20% of Americans have nothing saved for retirement in any kind of investment or savings vehicle. In addition, Labor Department statistics show that on average women earn lower wages, have higher job turnover, are frequently employed in industries with low or no pension coverage, and, if covered, receive lower pension benefits than men (one-half the pension benefit).

In keeping with its pension-related mission, PWBA launched "Save! Your Retirement Clock is Ticking," a public awareness campaign focusing attention on savings as a vital, permanent concern and providing Americans with the facts they need to ensure long-term financial security. The campaign includes a broad based support coalition of private sector organizations, a special women's outreach program, and wide multi-media outreach.

American Savings Education Council (ASEC). This is broad-based coalition of influential organizations representing savings groups, trade and professional associations, labor unions, community groups, and representatives of the private sector. Over 200 partners now participate in the non-profit council to make saving and retirement planning both a vital concern of Americans and in the economic interests of employers.

Women's Outreach Program. The Secretary of Labor launched the women's outreach program in July 1996 in a speech to 2,000 members of the Business and Professional Women/USA. A new brochure, "Women and Pensions: What Women Need to Know and Do," and companion informational material provide basic facts about retirement benefits, resources for additional information, and practical tips on retirement.

As of December 31, 1996, the public awareness campaign had accomplished the following:

- Publication and distribution of campaign materials including more than 2 million copies of a hallmark guide, “The Top 10 Ways to Beat the Clock and Save for Retirement,” a revised and updated basic informational booklet on retirement, “What You Should Know About Your Pension,” and brochures, “Women and Pensions” and “Protect Your Pension.”
- ASEC developed an Internet Web site (<http://www.asec.org/>) featuring savings and retirement planning tools for the general public. Material is also available on PWBA home page (<http://www.dol.gov/dol/pwba>) or by calling PWBA’s toll-free Publication Hotline at 1-800-998-7542.
- An interpretive bulletin to help employers further distinguish between pension investment education and investment advice; this will encourage employers to institute more comprehensive educational programs for their employees.
- TIAA-CREF, an ASEC partner, sponsored a teleconference on basic retirement planning issues broadcast by the Community College Satellite Network to 400 community college and other sites across the country.
- PWBA developed and distributed five different print Public Service Announcements to more than 1500 newspapers and magazines nationwide with a combined circulation of over 51 million readers.
- The campaign achieved coverage by all the major news networks, including CNN, and was featured prominently on talk radio and the national press.
- PWBA signed an agreement with the National Council of Negro Women to provide grassroots assistance and information to NCNW centers around the country. Work is underway to coordinate future workshops with NCNW regional centers.

To keep up the momentum, PWBA is continuing to:

- ❖ Target speech opportunities with major women’s advocacy groups to enlist their aid in educating their members on the importance of having a pension. Target groups include the Council of Presidents, the League of Women Voters, National Organization for Women, National Committee on Pay Equity, National Consumers League, American Women in Radio and TV, National Association of Women Business Owners, and National Association for Female Executives. Encourage prominent women’s organizations to distribute savings education campaign materials and sponsor community town hall meetings on women and pensions.
- ❖ Launch a national media campaign tailored to reach women about pensions. PWBA will continue to work with the DOL Women’s Bureau to design specific outreach targeted to women’s magazines and publications, such as feature articles and/or related media roundtables.

Former military spouses. Legislation to prevent circumvention of a court-ordered payment to a former spouse by waiving military retirement pay to enhance a civil service retirement annuity is included in the National Defense Authorization Act of 1997. Once this Act is signed into law, the Department of Defense will revise policies to ensure that pension income for these former spouses is not lost.

Former Foreign Service spouses. The Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended, states that a prorated share of an annuitant's pension must be paid to each former spouse to whom he, or she was married for at least ten years, including five years with the Foreign Service, unless there is a court order to the contrary. The Act also states that a prorated survivor benefit must be paid to all former spouses who meet the above qualifications unless the former spouse has signed away rights to such benefits.

UNWAGED WORK

- ◆ The Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is conducting survey methods research on measuring non-market (unwaged) work. A BLS working group is assessing the feasibility of developing and conducting a survey to measure non-market work. At this time, the working group is focusing on the "input" approach to measuring non-market work and the reliability and validity of time-use diaries, which are the data-collection instruments used in the input approach.
- ❖ Cognitive research on time-use diaries is underway, as is a limited methodological pilot time-use survey to be conducted in spring 1997. The BLS working group also plans to develop a framework for carrying out future research on the output method of measuring non-market work.
- ❖ In 1996, the BLS proposed a conference in fall 1997 on estimating the value of non-market work. An interagency working group was formed and detailed descriptions of conference paper topic areas were developed. It is hoped that recognized experts in measuring the value of non-market work can be brought together for the proposed conference to discuss relevant issues as well as findings from the cognitive research being conducted by BLS. Discussions are underway with various federal agencies to determine how much funding they can commit for this conference. The availability of funds will determine its format and size.

NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS

The Department of Justice Civil Rights Division's Housing and Civil Enforcement Section enforces the **Equal Credit Opportunity Act (ECOA)** and the **Fair Housing Act (FHA)**, which prohibit discrimination in credit transactions. To date, the Department of Justice has not brought any cases under the ECOA alleging discrimination based on sex. However, the Department's cases alleging lending discrimination based on race and national origin often beneficially serve women. For example, in October 1995, the Department settled a lawsuit against the Huntington Mortgage Company in Cleveland, Ohio which alleged that Huntington

discriminated against blacks in the pricing of home mortgage loans. Of the 149 blacks who will be receiving compensation in the case, 86 (58%) are women.

TRANSPORTATION

“Livable Communities” Initiative. The Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration has awarded funding to 16 projects around the U.S. that demonstrate the characteristics of community-sensitive transit that enhances personal mobility while building stronger, more vibrant communities. These communities are coordinating a participatory community-based planning process that will create a people-oriented design for community transit services. For example, the program creates transit centers that include services at or near bus and train stations. Women can drop their children off at reliable day care centers, do banking, complete errands or get medical attention on their way to or from work.

The FTA is committed to developing livable communities that put people first and will continue working with state and local governments to implement existing and future projects. The objectives of “Livable Communities” are an ongoing planning, programming, project development, and project implementation process.

TELEMARKETING FRAUD

The Department of Justice Criminal Division’s Fraud Section and U.S. Attorneys worked together to complete two recent undercover investigations of telemarketing fraud, which traditionally has been targeted at the elderly. Due to their increased life expectancy, women are often victims of these telemarketing scams.

F.2. Facilitate women’s equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

The Department of Treasury heads an interagency effort with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Office of Thrift Supervision on methods to encourage ownership of insured depository institutions by women and minorities.

- ◆ **National Access Committee.** In March 1997, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency announced the formation of a National Access Committee, an institutional structure at the OCC to assist national bank exploration of new business opportunities and further advance the agency’s commitment to full and fair access to financial services for all Americans, including women, minorities, low- and moderate-income households, and small business owners.

The 12 member committee will meet quarterly. Its members are drawn from OCC’s safety and soundness examiners, compliance examiners, economists, attorneys, district

community reinvestment/development specialists, and the director of community relations.

Specifically, the Comptroller directed the Committee to:

- Conduct research on access to financial services using data from OCC compliance examinations and other sources.
- Oversee an initiative to extend the frontiers of banking to households that are not now bank customers through educational forums, dialogue, and policy research, including coordinating the OCC's support of the Treasury Department's efforts to increase access to financial services, particularly EFT 99 (Electronic Funds Transfer).
- Conduct research on the impact of credit scoring on consumer access to banking services.
- Conduct an analysis of how on-line banking may be used to facilitate access to financial services.

MICROENTERPRISE

Women constitute the majority of Americans who gain access to credit through microenterprise lending. Microenterprise programs have been successful in assisting owners of very small businesses, particularly women, to gain their first access to critical resources for improving their lives. The United States has taken several key actions to further support self-employment and microenterprise development:

The Community Development and Regulatory Improvement Act of 1994. The Act created the CDFI Fund which provides funds that stimulate the creation and expansion of a diverse set of community development financial institutions (CDFIs) and provide incentives to traditional banks and thrifts through the Bank Enterprise Awards (BEA) Program. The investments work toward building private markets, creating healthy local economies, promoting entrepreneurship, restoring neighborhoods, generating local tax revenues, and empowering residents.

The Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund. The Treasury Department, through the CDFI Fund established in 1995, promotes microlenders and other financial institutions dedicated to community development.

Presidential Awards for Excellence in Microenterprise Development. The Department of the Treasury, through the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, established the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Microenterprise Development to honor outstanding efforts in the U.S. The President presented the first awards in January 1997 at a White House ceremony. Awards were made to different types of programs representing the broad diversity of the field of microenterprise development. Best practices from the winning programs are being disseminated.

Interagency Collaboration on Microenterprise Development. As part of the United States commitments following the Fourth World Conference on Women, the President directed Treasury

Secretary Rubin to take all appropriate actions to coordinate all microenterprise programs administered by federal agencies and departments. Through the CDFI Fund, meetings will be held with representatives of the various federal programs to explore possible collaborative efforts in support of microenterprise development in the United States. The first meeting will be convened mid-year 1997.

COMMODITY PROGRAMS

Prior to 1991, the USDA Farm Program Administration's rules governing agricultural commodity program participation severely limited female farmers' ability to receive benefits. In 1991, in order to permit women's full participation, USDA amended the rules to recognize women's signatures as valid on various commodity program forms whether their status was as principal or joint operator of their farms; this enabled women to apply independently for commodity program payments. Another amendment permitted joint husband and wife operators to be considered as two persons, rather than one as previously allowed, for the purpose of determining maximum payment limits.

TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY

Short Term Lending Program. The Department of Transportation provides revolving lines of credit to certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprises engaging in transportation-related work. It has grown from \$1.3 million in FY 1992, when four of nine lines of credit, totaling \$592,000, went to women-owned firms, to over \$14.1 million in FY 1995, when 22 of 58 lines of credit went to such firms, totaling \$5.05 million.

Bonding Assistance Program. DOT provides bid, payment and performance bonds to women-owned businesses working on transportation projects. The program has grown from \$438,000 in FY 1992, when five of six bonds, totaling \$138,000, went to women-owned firms, to \$14.4 million in FY 1995, when 21 of 64 bonds, totaling \$4.6 million, went to women-owned firms.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY LEGISLATION

The federal government has established several programs designed to aid small businesses owned by women and people of color. However, in June 1995 the U.S. Supreme Court decided the case of *Adarand v. Peña*, which makes it much more difficult for the federal government to continue such programs. Since the June 1995 decision, some of these programs have been challenged in federal courts as unfairly assisting women and people of color. Where consistent with *Adarand* and its implementation, the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division defends these federal affirmative action programs against such challenges. In addition, the Civil Rights Division defends challenges in federal court to policies implemented under Executive Order 11246, which proscribes discriminatory employment practices by federal contractors.

F.3. Provide business services, training and access to markets, information and technology, particularly to low-income women.

PROMOTING WOMEN-OWNED/WOMEN-MANAGED BUSINESSES

The Small Business Administration (SBA) Office of Women's Business Ownership was established by Presidential Executive Order in 1979 and made permanent by statute in 1994. The Office's mission is to foster the success of women entrepreneurs. It engages in advocacy and outreach to the almost 8 million women business owners across the country. Programs include:

Women's Network for Entrepreneurial Training. The Network offers mentoring and support for aspiring women entrepreneurs.

Women's Demonstration Program. The SBA offers business training and technical assistance and special emphasis support in procurement, access to credit and welfare to work in 53 Women's Business Centers across the country.

- ❖ [The Department of Defense will establish two Women's Demonstration Programs on military installations mirroring current SBA demonstration sites.]

Loans. From FY 1992 to 1995, SBA increased loans to women by almost 300%, with women receiving almost \$5 billion in financial assistance. This huge influx of capital to women was accomplished through:

- **Increased outreach.**
- **Women's Prequalification Pilot Loan Program.** The program was launched in 1994 to work with women to develop loan applications that SBA then prequalifies for a guarantee before the applicant approaches a bank. Over \$60 million in financial assistance has been made available to women since the program's inception in 16 pilot locations. The program has now been expanded nationwide.
- **"LowDoc" and Microloan Programs.** The Low Documentation loan program ("LowDoc") shrinks loan application and processing time. The Microloan program offers assistance to entrepreneurs in need of only small amounts of capital or credit. Women receive approximately 40% of all microloans.

As part of SBA's five-year strategic plan, it has identified key strategic goals, including (1) improving access to capital; (2) enhancing education, counseling, and information; and (3) serving as a strong advocate, particularly by providing procurement and research opportunities.

Improving access to capital. Some small businesses with great potential for creating jobs and increasing U.S. competitiveness, have experienced substantial difficulty obtaining capital and

credit. Women-owned businesses figure significantly within both groups. SBA has identified five objectives to achieve this goal:

- 1) Provide long-term capital to small businesses when it is not otherwise available on reasonable terms.
- 2) Encourage small business lending and surety bonding to achieve higher employment and Gross Domestic Product growth.
- 3) Promote capital access for traditionally-underserved small business markets and geographic areas, e.g., women, minorities, small exporters, inner cities, rural areas, tribal territories.
- 4) Develop new, innovative, and technologically-advanced methods of providing financial assistance (e.g., electronic lending).
- 5) Maintain a high quality portfolio.

SBA's strategies to achieve these objectives include:

- 1) Promote access to venture capital and equity investment using vehicles and programs of the Small Business Investment Companies (SBICs).
- 2) Host "Equity Matters" roundtables for lenders and women business owners.
- 3) Implement a liquidation improvement plan.
- 4) Pilot test electronic lending.
- 5) Set focused goals for underserved clients for each SBA district office.
- 6) Implement pilot delivery mechanisms (including the Export Working Capital Program, FAS\$TRAK (a program allowing banks to use their own documentation and procedures for small business loans up to \$100,000 while SBA agrees to guarantee 50 percent of the loan), and CAPLines (financing small businesses' short-term, cyclical working-capital needs)).

While each of these strategies will benefit all small business owners, agency plans that focus on women include:

- 1) Expanding the Women's Prequalification Pilot Loan program.
- 2) Producing a nationwide series of seminars, "Alternative Approaches to Accessing Capital for Women," and publishing a companion guide.
- 3) Producing on-line information on capital sources for women available through SBA's home page at <http://www.sba.gov/womeninb>
- 4) Expanding outreach to women about the Small Business Innovation Research program linking small businesses with tens of millions of dollars in federal research and development grants for high technology.

Enhancing education, counseling, and information. The SBA has found that a large number of the nation's business failures can be directly attributed to inadequate owner/managerial decision-making and performance. However, with its extensive grassroots outreach and hundreds of non-profit business training partners, SBA can maximize small businesses' chances for success through management assistance, information, and counseling. Women in particular have benefited from programs offering business development training and technical assistance such as the Women's Demonstration Site program. SBA objectives for increasing these resources are as follows:

- 1) Provide user-friendly access to information, technical and management counseling, and training to small businesses. SBA's Business Information Centers (BICs) opening across the nation exemplify implementation of this objective.
- 2) Align business education more closely with financial assistance to maximize benefits to clients obtaining SBA-guaranteed loans.
- 3) Expand use of intermediaries (such as Small Business Development Centers, the Service Corps of Retired Executives, and Business Information Centers) to provide counseling and training on the full range of SBA programs and services.
- 4) Expand the Women's Network for Entrepreneurial Training (WNET), a one-on-one mentoring program, as well as WNET Roundtables for groups of entrepreneurs.
- 5) Maintain a high quality portfolio.

❖ **Internet "Virtual" Women's Demonstration Site.** Through this SBA site, women will be able to access the type of training, counseling, and technical assistance typically available through the 54 demonstration sites. In addition, SBA will soon link the 54 demonstration sites and approximately 100 other non-profit training organizations for women through a Women's Business Intranet. Sites will be able to share e-mail, hold on-line discussions, and receive regular information from SBA's Office of Women's Business Ownership.

Serving as a strong advocate, particularly in providing government procurement and research opportunities. SBA promotes small business federal procurement opportunities, supports the Small Business Innovative Research program, and provides assistance to small firms owned and operated by economically and socially disadvantaged individuals. The SBA continues to implement the 1995 White House Conference on Small Business recommendations developed by thousands of business owners from across the country. SBA has set the following objectives:

- 1) Ensure that a fair share of federal procurement dollars go to small businesses through aggressive "goaling" and expanded outreach.
- 2) Identify and conduct outreach to disadvantaged small businesses to help them become successful enterprises in the mainstream economy.
- 3) Increase the commercialization of research and ensure that an appropriate share of federal research and development dollars are won by small businesses.

- 4) Streamline processes to enable easier and more efficient use of the services provided by SBA's Office of Advocacy.
- 5) Further implement the 1995 White House Conference on Small Business recommendations.

[❖ See A.1 for discussion of SBA's Welfare-to-Work initiative.]

FEDERAL PROCUREMENT CONTRACTS

Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act of 1994. FASA simplified the procurement process and made it easier for small firms to do business with the government. A key provision of FASA challenges each agency in the federal government to buy at least 5% of its good and services from women-owned businesses. (See Pilot Project under Interagency Coordination below.) Of approximately \$200 billion in federal procurement contracts, the value going to women-owned businesses has increased from \$181.3 million in FY 1979 to \$3.9 billion in FY 1992, to \$4.6 billion in FY 1993, to FY \$4.9 billion in FY 1994.

Transportation. In addition to the general federal small business procurement program implemented through general contracting, DOT also has a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program whereby DOT provides financial assistance for transportation projects of state and local governments and other recipients of federal funds. Goals are negotiated annually with each fund recipient for at least 10% of the contract dollars to be awarded to women and other socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, except for the Federal Railroad Administration's 15% minimum goal for various railroads. The DBE Program has increased the number of procurements awarded by recipients of DOT funds to firms owned and controlled by women for highway, mass transit and aviation-related construction and concession projects. In the DBE program, small, women and disadvantaged business enterprises received 14%, or \$2.8 billion, in FY 1995, of which women received \$1.1 billion or 41%, and in FY 1996 DBEs received \$2.7 billion of which women received \$1.2 billion or 43.4%. In FY 1995 direct federal transportation procurements, women-owned businesses received 5.5% in subcontracts from DOT. In FY 1994 women-owned small businesses received 6.82% in subcontracts from DOT, the highest of any federal department.

Defense. DoD's acquisition process has an outreach program to businesses owned by women which provides seminars and procurement conferences to educate women business owners on opportunities and procedures within the DoD acquisition process. As of 1996, women-owned businesses were receiving \$1.9 billion in contracts per year.

Agriculture. USDA contracts with private firms to provide products and services and also provides services to firms in rural areas and agriculture-related industries. Programs such as the investment program in the Agricultural Marketing Service and commodity purchases for USDA-administered domestic and international food programs engage in outreach to women entrepreneurs in banking and commodity marketing. USDA also uses public/private partnerships to target federal and private sector resources to women entrepreneurs.

NEW USDA INITIATIVES:

- ❖ **Evaluation.** Planned improvements in data collection on the participation rates of women entrepreneurs in USDA contracts and services will make evaluation of these efforts possible.
- ❖ **Outreach.** Expand outreach targeting women to increase their participation in the agricultural economy. USDA will seek out new communications channels to more effectively reach women-owned businesses as well as increase participation by women farmers/ranchers in USDA's Small Farmer/Rancher Outreach Training and Technical Assistance Program designed to improve farm incomes through better farm management and financial analysis skills.

INTERAGENCY COORDINATION IN FOSTERING WOMEN'S BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

The **Interagency Committee on Women's Business Enterprise** coordinates federal agency initiatives and ensures that women entrepreneurs' success is considered by each federal agency. The Interagency Committee, in partnership with the National Women's Business Council (a congressional advisory council established by the Women's Business Ownership Act of 1988 to develop a comprehensive women's business initiative) has developed the following:

- **A Procurement Pilot for Women.** In conjunction with SBA's Office of Government Contracting, the Pilot involves an interagency effort to reach the 1994 Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act's 5% procurement goal for women-owned business. SBA plans to hold training seminars on women and procurement in each of its district offices in the next few years.
- The Partnership newsletter, designed and written in the manner of a corporate marketing piece profiles important policymakers, provides recent data on available federal programs and key phone numbers, and catalogues up-coming events and resources.
- A video, "Changing the Face of the Economy."
- Ongoing on-line access to opportunities for women business owners via the SBA Office of Women's Business Ownership homepage at <http://www.sba.womeninb>. The homepage provides up-to-the-minute access to information from SBA, the Interagency Committee, the National Women's Business Council, and the White House Office of Women's Initiatives and Outreach.
- A collection of women entrepreneur success stories exemplifying public/private partnership. These stories of women business owners who have done business with the federal government, whether as a contractor, loan guarantee recipient, or simply by using information resources, are meant to inspire existing and future women business owners and provide information from Interagency Committee leaders on federal initiatives fostering women's business ownership.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Women in Trade Business Development Missions. The Department of Commerce (DOC) International Trade Administration leads trade missions for women business owners. The initiative began in spring 1995 and will continue until women-owned businesses are no longer underrepresented in exporting. The DOC National Telecommunications and Information Administration also has recruited aggressively for the inclusion of women on Secretary of Commerce Trade Missions to other countries.

Export Assistance. The International Trade Administration has made a concerted effort to reach out to women's business organizations to inform them of the export assistance services offered by the Department of Commerce and to encourage members of the organizations to become active exporters.

Various Department of Commerce offices and agencies have adopted a proactive approach to networking and communicating with women in the private sector. For example, the Director General of the DOC U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service incorporates speaking events to women's groups, international CEOs and multinational organizations to promote women-owned businesses through the Commercial Service international and domestic network.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS PROMOTING WOMEN'S BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

- ❖ The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Working Party on Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SME), a global forum of policy makers, held a three-day international economic summit April 16-18, 1997 to foster the role of women business owners in the global economy. The Department of Commerce International Trade Administration (ITA) coordinated the U.S. government role in this event. ITA's OECD representative attended the conference to provide insight on how ITA assists U.S. women-owned businesses and to monitor and follow up on initiatives resulting from the conference.

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

Agency for International Development (USAID) goals include:

- Assisting women to increase their income and assets through microfinance programs.
- Improving women's access to and successful use of credit.
- Supporting women's use of microfinance services (both formal and informal).
- ❖ **USAID's Microenterprise Initiative.** This targets \$70 million annually to assist women's microenterprise development. This initiative focuses on building institutions that will provide financial services to poor women. In addition, USAID training and technical assistance in areas such as accessing markets and improving appropriate

technology will be made available to women micro-entrepreneurs. USAID will continue to collaborate with other donors to expand their support for microenterprise development for women. Such work is currently underway through the World Bank's CGAP (Consultative Group on Alleviation of Poverty) and with the Government of Japan under the U.S./Japan Common Agenda.

- ◆ **Information Resources.** The Department of Commerce U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service (USFCS) has opened their Saudi Arabia library to women. Because of local religious custom, the USFCS in Jeddah had no interaction with businesswomen even though the Jeddah Chamber of Commerce lists over 300 Saudi businesswomen registered and licensed as owners and operators of legitimate Jeddah-area businesses. Most of these women work from their homes either for their husband's business or managing their own business, usually in the apparel, cosmetics, or retail sectors and have minimal contact with the outside world.

In September 1996, USFCS Jeddah opened its library doors to women on Tuesday afternoons. Assistance is available in the library's resources as well as counseling and help with research in this women-only environment. If the expertise of a USFCS male commercial specialist is needed, special counseling arrangements will be made so that social customs are respected.

F.4. Strengthen women's economic capacity and commercial networks.

INVESTMENT CAPITAL

- ❖ **Angel Capital Electronic Network (ACE-Net).** Sponsored by the SBA Office of Advocacy, ACE-Net is a nationwide Internet-based listing service that provides information to angel investors (private investors who help finance growing companies) seeking \$250,000 to \$5 million in equity financing. Women, who now own one-third of all small businesses yet have difficulty gaining access to financial resources to make the jump from small to medium sized enterprises are expected to benefit from this service. It is a matching service and does not serve as an investment adviser or broker-dealer. Currently in the development stage, ACE-Net will be run by a network of operators at nine university and state based non-profit organizations across the country. Once fully operational, ACE-Net will be run as a private, independent, not-for-profit organization. For information, the ACE-Net home page is: <http://ace-net.unh.edu> and the Office of Advocacy home page is: <http://www.sba.gov/ADVO/acenet.html>

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

ONE-STOP SHOPPING FOR EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

The Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration's One-Stop Shopping

initiative draws upon, and integrates, current employment and training programs. It is a vehicle for transforming fragmented programs into a coordinated information and service delivery system. Among its advantages, One-Stop Shopping is family-friendly, enabling women entering or transitioning in the labor force who also have many family responsibilities to most efficiently use their time and energy to find appropriate work and training.

One Stop Shopping presents a framework in which states have flexibility to customize their delivery systems to meet the particular needs of local labor markets (but still be part of a larger national system). To guide the states, the DOL has established four broad principles for the development of the One-Stop systems:

- Focus on performance and outcomes;
- Provide for system integration;
- Allow for customer choice;
- Provide all populations, including women, with an array of job finding and employment development assistance.

The DOL is working to ensure that the One-Stop systems being developed by the states are responsive to the needs of particular customer segments.

JOB TRAINING PARTNERSHIP ACT

The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) of 1982, administered by the Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration, authorizes training programs designed to prepare youth and adults facing serious barriers to employment for participation in the labor force. ETA accomplishes this by providing job training and other services that will result in increased employment and earnings, increased educational and occupational skills, and decreased welfare dependency. JTPA contains the following elements:

- Title II, which authorizes training and services for economically disadvantaged adults and youth both in and out of school;
- Title III, which authorizes employment and training help for dislocated workers, including dislocated homemakers;
- Title IV, which authorizes training and services for Native Americans, migrant and seasonal farm workers and veterans. Title IV also authorizes the Job Corps and research and evaluation activities.

Women make up a substantial proportion, about half, of the JTPA population.

DISPLACED HOMEMAKERS

Through the Job Training Partnership Act, the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) funds job training and employment services for dislocated workers, including displaced homemakers. Displaced homemakers in three states are among the populations served by a

dislocated worker demonstration program designed to test the particular services and service mixes needed to help target groups attain key objectives. For displaced homemakers, services include specialized readjustment, training, and supportive services geared to address their multiple and unique employment barriers.

Demonstration Projects. These 18-month projects will be completed by October 1997:

- ◆ Eastern Workforce Development Board, Muskogee, Oklahoma, serving 75 persons in a seven county area.
- ◆ Montana Job Training Partnership, Inc., Helena, Montana, serving 115 persons drawn from a ten county area, with services provided in both Butte and Helena.
- ◆ The Oregon Consortium, Albany, Oregon, serving 95 displaced homemakers from four counties.

THE JOB CORPS

The Job Corps is a residential training program, providing basic education, vocational training, counseling, medical care, and related support services for students. Post-program placement services are also offered to assist students enter employment or further education. One of the primary goals of ETA's Job Corps program is to provide education and training for disadvantaged young women ages 16-24.

The Job Corps has taken steps to increase the participation of young women in its programs, including:

- targeted recruitment brochures for females;
 - brochures and posters depicting young women in non-traditional trades;
 - provision of on-site child care at a number of Job Corps Centers;
 - institution of a zero tolerance policy for violence and drugs; and
 - institution of a requirement that all Job Corps centers provide training on sexual harassment for staff and students.
- ❖ The Job Corps will continue to recruit young women for the program and plans to enroll approximately 35,000 young women annually through the year 2000.

MILITARY SPOUSES

DoD has approximately 200 employment assistance managers worldwide who work to develop employment and training opportunities in the private sector as well as educational and volunteer opportunities for spouses. Over 90% of civilian spouses are women married to active duty men, and about 65% of military spouses are in the labor force. Spouses with access to an on-installation employment assistance program show a consistently higher participation rate in the labor force compared to those spouses for whom an assistance program is not available.

- ❖ DoD launched a three year pilot project to assist relocating spouses of active duty service members in obtaining non-federal employment. Over the next three years, DoD will allocate \$250,000 per year to fund demonstration projects which emphasize skills building and educational and networking opportunities for spouses.

FOREIGN SERVICE SPOUSES

The Family Liaison Office of the State Department maintains a spouse skills bank and assists family members in locating employment in the U.S. and abroad. Programs have been developed to enable embassies and consulates to utilize spouse skills to meet their increasing demands, including filling certain entry level officer positions. Bilateral work agreements and de facto work arrangements have been concluded with 126 countries, enabling spouses of U.S. Government employees to work in the local economy. Courses are available to spouses to gain functional skills needed at foreign missions, to hone their job search skills and to teach them to be English as a Second Language instructors.

DISLOCATED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

The Office of Personnel Management has as a priority leading the U.S. Government's downsizing and restructuring in such a manner as to minimize the potential adverse impact on women and minorities.

OPM has facilitated federal agencies' and employees' use of buyouts and voluntary early retirement programs as RIF avoidance strategies. OPM also issued regulations giving job selection priority to displaced federal employees, helped set up a model career transition facility for Washington metropolitan area federal employees, and developed career transition guides for employees available both in hard copy and on a computer bulletin board.

By educating agencies on the tools available to avoid RIFs, adverse impact on all employees, especially women and minorities, can be mitigated.

RESEARCH

RURAL AND FARM WOMEN

Over the past several years, a small number of studies conducted by social scientists at the Department of Agriculture have increased knowledge of women's roles and participation in U.S. agriculture. Studies have focused on women farm operators and landowners, the intergenerational transfer of agricultural land, and the blending of farm and off-farm work in farm households. USDA cosponsored the Fifth Conference on Rural and Farm Women in Historical Perspective held in December 1994, bringing together women who study rural and farm women and women who live and work on farms and in rural communities. An edited volume of selected papers from the conference is being prepared for publication. Other current and planned projects include:

- ◆ A management and time allocation study of women principal and joint farm operators.
- ◆ An examination of the social and economic status of non-metro women.
- ◆ An employment and earnings study of hired farm workers incorporating gender-disaggregated data.

In addition to research conducted at USDA, the Department is supporting approximately 20 research projects at academic institutions relating to women in the economy.

MILITARY SPOUSES

The Department of Defense has initiated a research effort to study the employment barriers impacting junior military spouses, mainly wives (approximately 145,000). This effort will identify strategies to best assist junior spouses in obtaining employment.

[See A.4 for the Department of Labor Women's Bureau downsizing research.]

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

The Department of Commerce International Trade Administration provides technical assistance to community organizations in Northern Ireland in an effort to reach and assist women-run organizations to strengthen their economic capacity and establish a network of model U.S. organizations implementing successful programs in the U.S.

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) is devoting agricultural extension resources to help women in Russia and Poland cope with the transition to a market economy.

In Russia, training workshops have focused on family financial management, home economics, and developing alternative sources of income.

In Poland, Agricultural Advisory Service women employees were among the first selected and trained to lead business planning workshops throughout the country. They trained more than 2,000 extension staff (about two-thirds women) to prepare business plans for farms and other businesses. Women have also participated in assistance programs to develop "agrotourism" in their communities and in family financial management and home economics training workshops.

F.5. Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination.

TITLE VII OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964, AS AMENDED

Both the Department of Justice and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission are involved in enforcing Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

Title VII seeks to deter intentional discrimination in the workplace by making it an unlawful employment practice for any employer to:

- fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to [her] compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex or national origin; or
- limit, segregate, or classify employees or applicants for employment in any way which would deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect [her] status as an employee, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

In other words, it is unlawful for an employer to treat women less favorably than men because of their sex, regardless of whether that treatment is related to hiring, firing, promotions, salaries or benefits. Furthermore, the Supreme Court declared in *Dothard v Rawlinson* (1977), that it is impermissible for an employer to refuse to hire an individual woman or man on the basis of stereotyped characterizations of the sexes.

In addition to intentional discrimination in the form of disparate treatment of an individual, Title VII also prohibits intentional or unintentional discrimination in the form of an employment practice that causes a disparate impact on the basis of sex, provided that the employment practice is not job related or required by business necessity.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT/HOSTILE WORK ENVIRONMENT

In the United States, sexual harassment by an employee's co-workers or supervisors which creates a hostile work environment for her (or him) is considered a form of sex discrimination under Title VII.

THE PREGNANCY DISCRIMINATION ACT OF 1978

This Act amended Title VII to expand the definition of the term "because of sex" and "on the basis of sex" to include, but not be limited to: because of or on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, and women affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions shall be treated the same for all employment-related purposes, including receipt of benefits under fringe benefit programs, as other persons not so affected but similar in their ability or inability to work.

RELIEF AVAILABLE UPON PROOF OF DISCRIMINATION

The elements of individual relief which are normally sought and granted once a Title VII violation is proven include back pay, retroactive seniority for competitive (e.g., promotions) and noncompetitive (e.g., vacations) purposes, and job opportunity relief (i.e., the right of a victim discriminatorily denied a job to be given priority opportunity to fill the next available vacancy in that job if she or he so desires).

ENFORCEMENT OF TITLE VII

Enforcement responsibility for the provisions of Title VII as they apply to state and local government employers lies with the Department of Justice. There are two general types of cases which the DOJ brings against state and local government employers it believes is engaging in unlawfully discriminatory employment practices: (1) cases involving individual complaints of discrimination filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) where the EEOC has determined there is reasonable cause to believe that the employer has discriminated against the individual; and (2) cases where the U.S. Attorney General has reasonable cause to believe that a state or local government employer is engaged in a pattern or practice of discrimination.

Within the past five years, the DOJ has brought or resolved over 50 cases involving sex discrimination, 14 of which involved a sexual harassment claim. The DOJ has fought for equal treatment for women in a wide range of job positions including custodians, laborers, emergency medical technicians, radio dispatchers, corrections officers, police officers, fire fighters, school administrators, and even a ferry operator. As a result of the cases which have been resolved over the past five years, the DOJ has obtained well in excess of \$10 million in monetary relief for women who were victims of sex discrimination, with over \$2 million of that amount awarded to women who were victims of sexual harassment. In addition, over 2,000 women have received monetary relief and/or job offers or promotions, depending upon the nature of the case, as a result of enforcement efforts during the past five years.

Beyond obtaining monetary and job relief for women in sex discrimination or sexual harassment cases brought and resolved by the Department of Justice, many employers agreed to and were thereafter required to do the following where appropriate: refrain from discriminating against female employees, applicants, or potential applicants for employment; refrain from retaliating against individuals who complain about sex discrimination; modify hiring assignments and promotional procedures that operate as barriers to women; provide raises to women along with ensuring that women are paid the same wages and given the same benefits as men performing substantially similar duties; treat pregnant women the same as others who are temporarily disabled for other reasons; post policies which explicitly bar sexual harassment throughout the work place; hire an equal employment opportunity officer to develop and implement a comprehensive sexual harassment training program for employees; require all employees and supervisors to attend sexual harassment training sessions; set up procedures for promptly investigating internal complaints of sexual harassment and retaliation.

Also, many employers agreed to undertake affirmative efforts to recruit and employ females in their organizations. Through Title VII litigation, the United States continues its efforts to seek relief for victims of discrimination while simultaneously forcing employers to change their discriminatory employment practices.

In addition, there have been several cases brought by the Department of Justice not included in the figures mentioned above because they involved both sex and race discrimination, so that it

was difficult to determine how much of the monetary or job opportunity relief was awarded to women who were discriminated against solely on the basis of their sex.

Finally, in the last one and one-half years, the DOJ has given increased priority to the following two activities:

- ◆ seeking to identify and address patterns or practices of illegal discrimination against women in non-traditional jobs in government facilities or agencies that deal with the public, such as public utilities and mass transportation systems; and
- ◆ addressing illegal discrimination against women in mid- and upper-level promotions and other glass ceiling issues in public safety, transportation, and public utilities industries.

The goal of these activities will be to eliminate occupational segregation and broaden the scope of jobs available to women by increasing the number of women in non-traditional jobs and, thereby, diversifying the workforce in these fields — both at the entry level and at higher level decision-making positions.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION AND TITLE VII

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has pursued its mission of eradicating sex discrimination on three main fronts: the administrative process, issuance of policy documents, and litigation.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS

- Since 1990, the number of sex discrimination charges received by the Commission has increased from 17,836 to 23,813. Those numbers represent a relatively constant percentage (around 30%) of overall charges. However, since 1990, the number of charges of sexual harassment filed with EEOC and state or local fair employment practice agencies (FEPAs) rose dramatically. Just 6,127 such charges were filed in 1990, representing less than 5% of all charge filings. In contrast, preliminary numbers for FY 1996 show that more than 15,000 sexual harassment charges were filed, representing approximately 11% of the total charges filed that year.
- Monetary relief obtained at the administrative stage between FY 1990 and 1996 increased dramatically. EEOC obtained \$26.6 million for victims of sex discrimination in pre-litigation settlements in 1990; \$47.1 million in 1996.
- The increase in monetary relief for sexual harassment charges is even more striking. In 1990 the EEOC garnered \$7.7 million in monetary benefits for sexual harassment claims. By FY 1995, that figure nearly quadrupled to \$27.3 million.
- The federal government sector has also seen an increase in sex discrimination and sexual harassment claims since 1988. The numbers of appeals from women alleging racial, religious, ethnic, or non-sexual gender harassment increased from 144 to 286 during the same period.

POLICY ISSUANCES

- The EEOC has issued a number of important guidelines and policy documents developing the law on sex discrimination. Among these were the Guidelines on Employment Policies Relating to Pregnancy and Childbirth and Questions and Answers on the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, published in 1979, and the 1980 Guidelines on Sexual Harassment.
- The policies embodied in those Guidelines have been further amplified in several Commission documents, including policy statements on Current Issues of Sexual Harassment, Sexual Favoritism, *Harris v Forklift Systems, Inc.*, Parental Leave, and Compliance Manual chapters on harassment and pregnancy discrimination.

LITIGATION

EEOC has brought many cases over the years on behalf of victims of sex discrimination. Highlights of litigation include the following:

- In January 1997, EEOC persuaded Publix Supermarkets to pay \$81.5 million to settle accusations that it systematically denied promotions, raises, and preferred assignments to women. EEOC's class action lawsuit against Publix covered more than 100,000 women who worked since 1991 at supermarkets in several southern states.
- The EEOC has waged successful court challenges to obtain redress for sexual harassment. For example, in 1995, the Commission acquired more than \$1 million in a consent decree, to be paid to 15 women who were sexually harassed by the CEO of Del Laboratories. It was the largest monetary settlement ever obtained in a sexual harassment suit handled by the EEOC.
- The Commission has successfully challenged discrimination against women in non-traditional jobs. For example, successful cases have established that physical performance tests for entry level wood handler jobs disproportionately excluded women; that women were excluded from higher-paying craft jobs in electronics typically held by men; that an airline's use of weight standards that were more stringent for female than male flight attendants; that fine dining establishments discriminate against women in recruiting and hiring for server positions.

THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

The Department of Justice enforces Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Title II prohibits discrimination in employment against qualified individuals with disabilities by state and local governments. The ADA requires employers to reasonably accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities unless doing so would pose an undue hardship for the employer. The Department has investigated and resolved a number of complaints by women alleging disability-based employment discrimination.

FEDERAL CONTRACT COMPLIANCE

The Department of Labor Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs focuses significant enforcement efforts on gender discrimination. The OFCCP, part of DOL's Employment Standards Administration, enforces three equal employment opportunity laws: Executive Order 11246, as amended; Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and the affirmative action provisions of the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended. Taken together, they prohibit discrimination on the bases of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, and status as a Vietnam era or special disabled veteran; and require affirmative action in employment by federal contractors and subcontractors. Approximately 22% of the labor force is employed by federal contractors.

In administering the laws, OFCCP conducts approximately 4,000 compliance reviews per year to investigate contractors' systemic employment practices. These reviews work both to prevent gender discrimination and to require employers to examine the stereotypical thinking that often impedes women's progress.

Pay differentials. As part of its efforts to streamline paperwork requirements, OFCCP has begun developing a new approach to contractor reporting identifying pay differentials between men and women who are paid within the same salary band. This approach is intended to highlight where women are within a salary band and thus identify possible salary discrimination. OFCCP expects that the information gathered through this method will be less burdensome for employers to report and will enhance OFCCP's ability to use its limited compliance review resources effectively. By modifying the current job category reporting system, OFCCP will be able to quickly detect wage differentials and discrimination between men and women. By collecting more refined data, law-abiding employers will be protected from unnecessary investigations, and compliance reviews can be focused on employers with serious pay discrepancies. Where discrimination is found, corrective remedies will be sought, as appropriate.

Pay discrimination. The OFCCP Philadelphia regional office (which covers Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia) is investigating whether federal contractors' pay practices discriminate against women and minorities. The office examines a contractor's own determination of which jobs are equal and then examines whether women and minorities employed in those jobs are paid less than their male counterparts. The region has discerned patterns of pay discrimination using this analytical method. This effort has the support of the National Committee on Pay Equity.

Sexual and racial harassment. OFCCP recently began a new initiative in its Atlanta regional office (which covers Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee) to address sexual and racial harassment impacting many women. Harassment is often difficult to identify without a complaint, and victims of harassment are often reluctant to complain and instead suffer in silence. The initiative is designed to ensure equal employment opportunity and improved customer service to women and minorities

through compliance reviews identifying and remedying harassment. The Atlanta regional office will share with the public the knowledge it gains on ways to eliminate harassment.

- ❖ **Testers initiative.** Between now and the year 2000, OFCCP hopes to include women in its testers initiative. Male and female job seekers would be given similar resumes and sent to the same set of firms to apply for work — to find out whether employers are less likely to interview or offer a job to female applicants. This project will be completed in about two years; OFCCP's systemic compliance reviews and investigation of complaints are anticipated to be ongoing.

The OFCCP Internet home page is at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/esa>

THE FAIR PAY CLEARINGHOUSE

In 1994, more than a quarter million working women responded to the Department of Labor Women's Bureau survey, Working Women Count! This major national survey asked working women about their jobs — what they like, what they don't like, and what they want to change. "Improving pay scales" was listed as a top priority for change. Working women said they want their true value in the workplace reflected in their paychecks.

- ◆ In September 1996, the Women's Bureau launched the Fair Pay Clearinghouse to provide easily accessible information on how women are achieving fair pay where they work. Over 130 organizations, including community organizations, business associations, labor unions, women's groups, and others have joined the Fair Pay Clearinghouse to provide information to others.

The Clearinghouse provides the following:

- *Worth More Than We Earn: Fair Pay for Working Women*, a description of the wage gap; how the wage gap differs by race, ethnicity, and age; and what employers, unions, and working women can do to eliminate it.
- *What Works: Fair Pay for Working Women*, a profile of employers who have improved wage-setting practices for women and people of color and the impact these changes have on women's lives.
- Information on resource organizations nationally and by state.
- Wage and occupational data on traditionally female jobs.
- ❖ **State Law Fact Sheets.** A fact sheet on fair pay laws in the states will be available soon. The Women's Bureau strongly encourages both employers who have made pay adjustments to traditionally female jobs and organizations working on fair pay to call and share information on their efforts.

Workers, employers, and organizations can call 1-800-347-3741 (or visit the Internet Web site at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/wb>).

WORKING WOMEN COUNT! HONOR ROLL

The Working Women Count! Honor Roll, launched by the Department of Labor Women's Bureau in 1995, addresses concerns voiced by more than 250,000 working women across the country who responded to the national Working Women Count! Survey in 1994. The women called for change in three areas: pay and benefits, balancing work and family, and respect and opportunity on the job.

In response to the survey, the Women's Bureau obtained more than 1,300 pledges from employers and other organizations throughout the United States, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands to initiate new programs or policies that improve women's pay and benefits, help balance work and family, and/or improve women's respect and opportunity on the job. Since September 1995, some 459 non-profits, 448 businesses, 129 elected government officials, 51 labor unions, 51 media organizations, and two on-line computer services pledged to make change.

Some 840, or more than half, of the businesses, governments and other organizations have completed or have taken steps to complete the implementation of their pledges.

In September 1996, the Women's Bureau held its first regional Working Women's Summits at 20 sites around the country where Honor Roll members were given public recognition and appreciation. A preliminary report of the first year's Honor Roll achievements was published and shared during the Summits. *What Works! The Working Women Count Honor Roll Report: A Selection of Programs and Policies that Make Work Better* highlights exemplary programs, policy modifications, and initiatives by Honor Roll members.

- ❖ **Final Honor Roll Report.** The Women's Bureau will publish the final report in May 1997 identifying private and public employment policies benefiting women in the areas of valuing women and women's work, balancing work and family, and fair pay.

NON-TRADITIONAL JOBS

WOMEN IN APPRENTICESHIP AND NON-TRADITIONAL OCCUPATIONS (WANTO) ACT OF 1992 AND WOMEN IN NON-TRADITIONAL EMPLOYMENT (NEW) ACT.

Many non-traditional occupations — occupations where 25% or fewer of the persons employed in an occupational group are women — are more likely to be associated with union membership, high earnings, and employee benefits. The Women's Bureau continues to encourage women to consider the wide array of these occupations as a way of becoming economically self-sufficient. These occupations include not only skilled blue-collar trades in construction and transportation industries, but also emerging technical occupations in business services, health care, telecommunications, utilities, and other public sector industries. Most of these service-based industries are projected to both achieve above-average growth into the 21st century and pay a living wage.

Technical Assistance. DOL's Women's Bureau and Employment and Training Administration (ETA) have worked together to promote the recruitment, training, and retention of women in apprenticeship and non-traditional occupations. Together with ETA's Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training, the Women's Bureau implemented the Technical Assistance program authorized by the 1992 WANTO Act, providing grants to community-based organizations to provide technical assistance to private-sector employers and unions to increase employment of women in apprenticeable and other non-traditional occupations. To date 13 WANTO Technical Assistance Projects working with employers and unions in various areas across the country.

Demonstration Projects. Similarly, the Women's Bureau and ETA's Office of Job Training Programs, implemented the Demonstration Program Grants authorized by the NEW Act. The Act amended the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), the federal government's major training and placement assistance for workers with employment barriers, to encourage states to broaden the range of training and placement for JTPA-eligible women in occupations non-traditional to them. The final grants authorized by NEW in the four-year demonstration program were awarded in June 1996. There have been 23 NEW Demonstration Grant Projects in 22 state JTPA systems.

- ❖ Into the year 2000 the Women's Bureau will work with organizations seeking to promote women in apprenticeable and non-traditional occupations. The Bureau and ETA are preparing a summary of each NEW and WANTO project and its local contact's name and phone number for ETA's on-line Training Technology Resource Center located at <http://trcnw.ttrc.doleta.gov/>. As available, other computer-based systems in the nation's employment and training community will include NEW and WANTO program strategies and practices. Under a WANTO grant, a community-based organization is now developing a national computer-based service and network to build a one-stop information center/clearinghouse, for use by information and service deliverers, for the broad range of apprenticeships and non-traditional occupations for women.

CONSTRUCTION

The Department of Transportation has expanded its Women in Construction initiative and enhanced outreach efforts to provide opportunities for women in highway construction trades. DOT's Federal Highway Administration provides training and technical assistance to states and contractors on hiring and retention of women in highway construction skilled trades.

COMBAT

The FY 1992-93 Defense Authorization Act removed legislative restrictions on assignment of women to combat aviation. The Secretary of Defense implemented this change in April 1993 in a policy memorandum allowing women to compete for assignments in aircraft engaged in combat missions. Since then, Department of Defense policy toward assignment of women has proceeded in three phases: first, a focus on aviation; second, assignment to naval combatant ships; and finally, ground assignments.

These changes to assignment policy have resulted in the opening of 260,000 positions that can be filled by either men or women. More than 90% of military career fields can now be filled by the best qualified and available person. For example:

- In aviation, women serve as pilots and navigators, tanker operators, and combat aircraft and airlift service operators.
- Navy career fields are 96% open to women. As of December 1995, women were embarked on 51 combatant ships (e.g., amphibious assault ships, guided missile destroyers, aircraft carriers). At sea, women now serve in all levels of the chain of command, including operations, logistics, intelligence, and flying combat mission aircraft from aircraft carriers.
- Marine Corps fields are 93% open to women. Marine Corps women can now be assigned to Marine Expeditionary Unit command elements, all helicopter squadrons, Harrier Squadrons, Marine Air Support Squadrons, and the Marine Expeditionary Unit Service Support Groups.
- In the Air Force, over 99% of all career fields and positions are open to women.
- In the Army, 91% of all jobs are open to women.

AGRICULTURE

The Department of Agriculture is making efforts to portray women in non-stereotypical roles in its information and outreach materials.

New Department of Agriculture initiatives:

- ❖ Use the media to improve outreach efforts for farm programs to women in non-traditional agricultural fields, including highlighting the role of women in U.S. agriculture.
- ❖ Expand the portrayal of women in non-traditional roles. Specifically, USDA will broaden its coverage of women in international trade media, such as the Ag Exporter magazine.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

In some cases, the enforcement of sanctions against sexual harassment has become a condition of receiving Department of Agriculture (USDA) services. For example, commodity grading services provided by the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service are withheld from plants where managers threaten female graders, and plant managers are required to undergo training before grading will be reinstated.

The Department of Justice Bureau of Prisons has established and enforces a strong policy on sexual harassment and provides annual training to all staff.

A senior level Department of Defense task force cochaired by the Secretary of the Air Force identified strategies to eliminate sexual harassment and other forms of discrimination in the work force.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AS AN EMPLOYER

The Office of Personnel Management. One of OPM's goals is to remove regulatory barriers that hinder women from maintaining and advancing their careers. Changes to a number of regulations issued by OPM have been completed. OPM will continue to review federal employment policy to eliminate unnecessary barriers and will prepare proposed regulation changes.

Examples of regulatory changes include:

- **Reentry.** In March 1996, OPM published final regulations giving noncompetitive appointment eligibility to family members who were former overseas employees. These regulations make it easier for family members, a high proportion of whom are women, to continue their careers after interruption to go overseas with the military or civilian sponsors.
- **Helping women balance work and family responsibilities.** In May 1996, OPM published final regulations allowing agencies to use temporary help service firms in certain circumstances, including to fill in for employee absences. The option of using these services enables agencies to more easily grant requests from employees for time off to care for their families.
- **Helping women combine school and work.** Regulations on the student employment program make it easier for federal agencies to collaborate with educational institutions to design programs that better meet the needs of student employees, more than half of whom are women. Students who need flexible temporary employment to earn a salary while continuing their studies work under the Student Temporary Employment Program, while students who seek career-related employment work under the Student Career Experience Program.

F.6. Promote harmonization of work and family responsibilities for women and men.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993. The FMLA provides important job protections for nearly 50 million American families by allowing up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in a 12-month period for vital family or health care needs. During the first 20 months the FMLA was in effect, more than 12 million Americans took leave for a reason covered by the Act.

The Department of Labor Wage and Hour Administration is responsible for administering and enforcing the FMLA. Wage and Hour conducted an aggressive outreach and educational effort once the Act became law and has now achieved widespread compliance on a voluntary basis in large part by developing both “user-friendly” regulations minimizing administrative burden to employers and easy-to-read compliance guides and fact sheets.

Some 5,700 employee complaints (less than 1% of FMLA-covered employees) have been made. About 40% of the complaints were actually covered by the FMLA, and 90% of them have been resolved, the vast majority through telephone calls that explained the provisions of the FMLA and steps necessary to remedy the situation.

- ◆ **FMLA Commission Report.** In April 1996, the Commission on Leave, established by the Act, reported to Congress on its findings of commissioned studies that family-friendly benefits support workers and are good for business in “A Workable Balance: A Report to Congress on Family and Medical Leave Policies.” The Commission reported on the ease of compliance with most employers reporting no problems or excessive costs in complying.

WORKING WOMEN COUNT HONOR ROLL

[See the discussion of the DOL Women’s Bureau’s Working Women Count Honor Roll in F.5 above. The Honor Roll had a major emphasis on work and family issues.]

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN LEARNING

In December 1995, the Department of Education held the Family Involvement Partnership in Learning, Employer Promise for Learning Sign-On Event for employers committing to review internal policies and practices to encourage greater parent and employee involvement in education. This was the kick-off of a National Drive for Family-Friendly Policies. The drive’s goal is twofold: to build community partnerships to promote and coordinate increased family involvement in children’s learning, and to share best practices with employees.

In April 1996, the ED, in collaboration with Columbia University, Working Mother Magazine, the Family Involvement Partnership for Learning, and others hosted a conference for teachers, parents, school administrators, community and religious leaders, employers, and graduate students in education. Topics included employers and schools, research on family involvement, involving fathers in children’s learning, overcoming barriers to parent involvement, and models of effective involvement in children’s learning.

- ❖ Promote family-friendly employment policies. The Department of Education will continue to recognize companies and educational organizations that are implementing family-friendly practices.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AS AN EMPLOYER

The Office of Personnel Management goal is to create a model federal workplace that fosters a quality work environment and family-friendly culture through policies, programs, and practices. It has responsibility for leadership in development and implementation of government-wide work and family programs.

Recent OPM actions include:

- **Sick leave for adopting a child.** By law, a U.S. Government employee may use sick leave for purposes related to the adoption of a child, such as:

- 1) Appointments with adoption agencies, social workers, and attorneys.
- 2) Court proceedings.
- 3) Required travel.
- 4) Any period of time the adoptive parents are ordered or required by an adoption agency or court to take time off from work to care for an adopted child.
- 5) Any other activities necessary to allow the adoption to proceed.

- **Sick leave to take care of family members.** The 1994 Federal Employees Family Friendly Leave Act allows a full time employee to use up to 40 hours (five days) of sick leave each leave year for family needs:

- 1) Incapacitation of a family member as a result of physical or mental illness, injury, pregnancy, or childbirth.
- 2) Medical, dental, or optical examination or treatment of a family member.
- 3) Arrangements necessitated by the death of a family member, or attendance at the funeral of a family member.

An additional 64 hours (eight days) may be used as long as the employee maintains a balance of at least 80 hours of sick leave in his or her sick leave account. Leave for part-time employees is pro-rated.

In addition, an employee who has personal or family medical emergencies and who has exhausted his or her own leave may receive donated annual leave of other federal employees from the federal voluntary leave sharing program.

- **Unpaid family and medical leave.** The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 entitles an employee to a total of 12 weeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period for:

- 1) The birth of a son or daughter and care of the newborn.
- 2) The placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care.

- 3) The care of an employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition.
- 4) An employee's own serious health condition that makes him or her unable to perform the duties of his or her position. An employee may substitute paid annual or sick leave for unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act.

- **Child care.** By law, federal government can fund the following costs of employee child care centers: electricity, lighting, heating, cooling, office furnishings and equipment, telephone service, security systems, classroom furnishing and equipment, kitchen appliances, and playground equipment. Additional costs are typically covered by tuition. Recognizing that over one-fourth of its employees have child care needs, the government sponsors about 1,000 child care centers.

In addition, federal agencies offer a range of other services such as resource and referral services, support groups, and educational workshops.

President Clinton will host a White House conference on child care in the fall of 1997 to highlight this important issue.

- **Enforcement of child support payments.** OPM's Work and Family Program Center and the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Child Support Enforcement conduct seminars, distribute child support information kits, and promote awareness of issues and resources to both help federally employed custodial parents who are having difficulty collecting child support payments and ensure that federal employees meet their child support responsibilities. These agencies are implementing President Clinton's Executive Order 12953 (February 1995) calling for the U.S. Government to become a model employer in enforcement of child support.
- **Elder care.** The Interagency Adult Dependent Care Working Group promotes government-wide elder care programs and activities that help employees who are caring for an older relative or friend.
- **Alternative work schedules.** By law, a federal agency employer can implement flexible or compressed work schedules (jointly referred to as alternative work schedules) for its employees. Alternative work schedules allow a variety of working arrangements to fit the needs of individual employees. An employee on a flexible work schedule can choose to work in excess of her/his required hours on some days and then shorten the length of a later workday or workweek. These excess hours are known as credit hours, and an employee can accumulate up to 24 credit hours to be used to make up for hours missed at a later date. Compressed work schedules allow an employee to work more than eight hours on certain days so as to shorten another workday or workweek. Two Presidential memorandums, in July 1994 and June 1996, directed each federal agency to support the expansion of family friendly work arrangements, including alternative work schedules.
- **Part-time employment and job sharing.** By law, since 1978 most government agencies are required to establish programs to promote part-time opportunities in all

grade levels. In 1990, OPM initiated a program to make it easier for interested federal employees to work part-time and/or job share. Today, nearly 50,000 permanent employees are working part-time in federal agencies across the country.

- **Telecommuting initiatives.** Telecommuting has existed in the U.S. Government for many years. This flexiplace arrangement permits employees to work at home or at other approved sites away from their offices for all or part of the work week. This program assists employees who need flexibility in work scheduling, commuting, handling family responsibilities, or adapting to a physical condition.
- ❖ **The President's Management Council (PMC)** is sponsoring a National Telecommuting Initiative aimed at increasing the number of federal telecommuters from the current 9,000 to 60,000 by the end of FY 1998.
- **Employee Assistance Programs.** U.S. Government agencies are required to establish programs which provide free, confidential counseling and referral services to employees and (where feasible) their family members who have drug and alcohol related problems. Most agencies have broad counseling programs offering mental health, emotional, family, financial, HIV/AIDS, and/or job stress counseling and referral.
- **Supporting the role of fathers in families.** In June 1995, President Clinton issued a memorandum, "Supporting the Role of Fathers in Families," to U.S. Government agencies directing them to review all programs, policies, and initiatives pertaining to families to ensure that they are father-friendly.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE PROGRAMS

- ◆ **Diplotots.** The State Department opened a Child Care Center, Diplotots, in Washington, in 1996. In addition, 11 embassies now provide space for child care centers. The Department issues an annual Child Care Report on the availability, quality and cost of child care at all Foreign Service posts.

Family Liaison Office. The Office provides support to family members of all U.S. Government agencies assigned to an embassy or consulate in the areas of family member employment, education, and crisis support. During evacuations, the office provides emotional and practical assistance to and advocates on behalf of displaced family members, the majority of whom are women. Community Liaison Office Coordinators at 150 overseas locations offer similar support to their mission communities.

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

Government-wide Child Care Initiative. The General Services Administration — the federal government's real estate, supplies and services agency — operates the Federal Recycling Program in government-owned and operated buildings. The program recovers office waste materials to sell for recycling. In FY 1995 sales amounted to \$811,571. All income generated

by individual federal agencies is returned to them and is authorized to be used for acquisition, waste reduction and prevention, recycling programs, environmental management programs, and other authorized employee programs, including tuition assistance for child care.

- ◆ GSA used its own refund for FY 1995 — \$49,167 — entirely to support GSA's Child Care Program.
- ◆ In addition, the GSA administrator contacted all Federal Executive agency heads urging them also to designate their receipts for child care tuition assistance.

EXAMPLES OF SPECIFIC FEDERAL AGENCY PROGRAMS INCLUDE

- **Department of Defense Child Care.** The DoD's child care program is the country's largest affordable, employee-sponsored child care program. DoD provides for care of over 200,000 children daily from birth to 12 years of age in Child Development Centers, family child care homes, and school age programs at over 300 locations worldwide, with 16,000 employees.
- ❖ With a need for 299,278 spaces, DoD currently provides 166,257 spaces, 54% of the need. DoD is striving to meet 65% of the need by the end of 1997, and 80% by 2000.
- ◆ **Department of the Interior Family Support Center.** The new Interior Family Support Rooms serve as a temporary office for employees when unforeseen family-related circumstances arise and an employee is needed at the work site. The Support Center enables the employee primary care giver to remain on the job and provide care to a child or parent at the same time. Located within the main Interior building, they contain fully-equipped work stations and appropriate furnishings for use by family members. A primary care giver is permitted to utilize the room for one to three days during which time more traditional alternative arrangements can be made.
- **CIA Programs.** The CIA established an employee financial counseling service through the CIA's Employee Assistance Program.

The CIA established the CIA Work and Family Center to provide internal and external information and assistance with issues ranging from dependent care information to job-placement services. Although located at CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia, the WFC reaches across the globe through electronic communications and 1-800 numbers. Staffed by human resource professionals, the WFC is also the umbrella organization for liaison with the Work and Family Council, composed of employees, and the Family Advisory Board, composed of family members.
- **Education.** As part of its Family Friendly Workplace Program, the Department of Education provides for a matching of up to four hours of annual and administrative leave during a pay period for employees' volunteer work in schools including the schools attended by their own children.

G. Women in Power and Decision-making



Platform for Action Strategic Objectives:

- G.1. Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making.
- G.2. Increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership.

G.1. Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making.

RIGHT TO VOTE

19TH AMENDMENT

Sec. 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

The Department of Justice Civil Rights Division's Voting Section is responsible for enforcement of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act, the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, the National Voter Registration Act of 1993, and other statutory provisions designed to safeguard the right to vote of racial and language minorities, disabled and illiterate persons, overseas citizens, persons who change their residence shortly before a Presidential election, and persons 18 to 20 years of age. Certainly, at least half of the beneficiaries of these laws are women and their political rights are likewise protected.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT ACCOMMODATIONS

Title II of the ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by State and local governmental entities. In numerous cases, investigations by the Department of Justice have resulted in increased access to State and local governmental facilities, programs, and activities. These improvements have also increased the access of women with disabilities.

For example, in a formal settlement agreement with the Department, the town of Manhattan, Montana agreed to make its town programs accessible through a combination of town hall renovations and alternative nonstructural measures.

PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The Department of Transportation has launched an effort to increase female representation on transportation related commissions and advisory boards. Female representation has increased six-fold since 1993.

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) has taken various steps to increase women's participation in public policy development:

- Many Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs include community and private sector participation achieved via boards and committees. These organizations provide opportunities for women to take an active role in public policy.
- As of 1996, 507 women serve on Farm Service Agency County committees, occupying six percent of all county committee positions. Of the 192 state committee positions, 26 percent are held by women. These elected positions are open to all eligible producers. USDA will expand efforts to encourage more women to participate on committees, and in other forums such as town hall meetings.
- USDA has also attempted to ensure access for women to Department Research and Promotion Boards. Several women are serving on the National Organic Standards Board, which advises the Secretary of Agriculture on national and international issues concerning organic foods. In the international arena, Foreign Agricultural Service private sector advisory groups have recently included women for the first time. The last meeting of the Universal Cotton Standards Advisory Committee, which reviews internationally-accepted cotton standards, was chaired by a woman. USDA will continue to strongly encourage participation by women in these groups.
- Through USDA's Family Community Leadership (FCL) program, women are recruited, trained and provided opportunities to participate in the formation of public policy. Many FCL graduates have been elected to public office, including mayors, county commissioners, and school boards. USDA is currently exploring how best to expand this program.

NEW DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE INITIATIVES

- ❖ Use existing USDA networks (including family and community educators) to increase awareness of public policy issues impacting women at the state and local level, and to develop action plans fostering women's involvement in these issues.
- ❖ Increase outreach efforts to encourage women to participate in the Farm Service Agency's state and county committee elections.
- ❖ Expand USDA program outreach to women's groups which offer potential leadership opportunities for women.
- ❖ USDA will undertake the following strategy to improve women's access to decision-making: Encourage cooperators in Foreign Agricultural Service programs to include small and medium sized firms in their memberships. Cooperators are organizations which work with USDA under an agreement or approved plan to promote U.S. agricultural exports. Such inclusion may result in a stronger female voice in these private organizations.

Department of Commerce. Several DOC agencies and offices have been successful in ensuring representation of women on their advisory committees and councils:

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has made significant progress in increasing the number of women on its advisory groups (Fishery Management Councils, the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee).

The Bureau of Export Administration has actively sought qualified women for membership on the President's Export Council Subcommittee on Export Administration.

The International Trade Administration's Trade Development, through its Office of Export Promotion Coordination, has made a concerted effort to expand the number of business women who are members of the Industry Sector and Industry Functional Advisory Committees, the Industry Policy Advisory Council, and the President's Export Council.

Trade Development's Office of Export Promotion Coordination ensures that industry, including women-owned and managed firms, has a strong voice in international trade negotiations and in formulating U.S. trade policy through these committees.

[See also K.1 for women and environmental decision-making.]

RESEARCH

The Department of Agriculture is currently supporting four university projects explicitly designed to explore women's roles in decision making, including an effort to document the levels and kinds of participation by women in selected volunteer agricultural organizations.

GLOBAL INITIATIVE

Women in Politics Program. The Agency for International Development (USAID) goal for its women's political participation project is to increase women's access to and participation in political processes and elections in both transitional and consolidating democracies around the world. The Global Women in Politics (G-WIP) program is designed to accelerate sharing of models, strategies, tools, and techniques that are working in different countries to advance women's full participation in the political process. A \$1 million three-year Cooperative Agreement has been awarded to the Asia Foundation, which is working with the African-American Institute, America-Mideast Education and Training Services, Inc., and PARITICIPA (a Chilean NGO). The G-WIP program is well established worldwide and will continue to build on its initial work over the next several years.

GLASS CEILING COMMISSION

The Glass Ceiling Commission was created by Congress in 1991 to study barriers that keep minorities and women from rising to the upper rungs of the corporate ladder, regardless of their qualifications or achievements, and to issue recommendations for eliminating these barriers. The Commission's final recommendations, issued in November 1995 as *A Solid Investment: Making Full Use of the Nation's Human Capital*, identified several areas where government action is crucial to breaking glass ceiling barriers. Various federal agencies are implementing some of the Commission recommendations, and some examples of that implementation is described after the relevant recommendation below.

RELEVANT GLASS CEILING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Recommendation to strengthen enforcement of antidiscrimination laws:

Workplace discrimination presents a significant glass ceiling barrier for minorities and women. The Commission recommends that federal enforcement agencies increase their efforts to enforce existing laws by expanding efforts to end systemic discrimination and challenging multiple discrimination. The Commission also recommends evaluating effectiveness and efficiency and strengthening interagency coordination as a way of furthering the effort. Additionally, updating anti-discrimination regulations, strengthening and expanding corporate management reviews and improving the complaint processing system play major roles in ending discrimination. Finally, the Commission recommends making sure that enforcement agencies have adequate resources to enforce anti-discrimination laws.

Strengthening interagency coordination: Strong interagency coordination — among the **Department of Justice**, the **Department of Labor**, and the **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)** — supported by high level policy making officials promotes efficient and effective enforcement of anti-discrimination laws. Executive Order 12067 (Coordination of Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Programs) and current EEOC regulations require other

federal agencies to coordinate with the EEOC on program and policy issues concerning equal employment opportunity.

Combating systemic discrimination. There are distinct and complementary roles for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the Department of Labor Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP). OFCCP acts as the equal employment administrator of the federal government's contracting system by requiring contractors to comply with their contractual equal opportunity obligations. These efforts are aimed at preventing systemic as well as individual instances of discrimination through critical self-analysis on an ongoing basis.

The EEOC reviewed its charge processing procedures in the spring of 1995 and authorized procedural changes designed to improve the development and investigation of systemic discrimination cases as well as cases based on Commissioner's charges (Commissioner's charges are ordinarily filed with respect to systemic matters). EEOC is also identifying particular issues suitable for pattern-and-practice and class action treatment.

Updating regulations. In an effort to carry out its enforcement responsibilities, the OFCCP has already taken steps to update its regulations so that the laws it administers achieve their intended aim with maximum effectiveness and a minimum burden to businesses. In order to maximize its effectiveness and better utilize diminishing resources, OFCCP has already begun to examine ways to increase the number of contractors reviewed each year and to induce contractors to comply with its requirements in the absence of a compliance review.

Improving the complaint processing system. The EEOC has undertaken efforts to change its processing procedures to make more efficient use of its existing resources and strengthen its enforcement role. For example, the EEOC has approved priority charge handling procedures that enable field offices to concentrate resources on those charges most likely to eradicate discrimination, expedite the voluntary settlement of charges by other employers, and inspire employers not yet under a charge to diversify their workforce.

2) Recommendation to improve data collection:

Accurate data on women and minorities can show where progress is or is not being made in breaking glass ceiling barriers. The Commission recommends that relevant government agencies revise the collection of data by refining existing data categories and improving the specificity of data collected. All government agencies that collect data must break it out by race and gender, and avoid double counting of minority women, in order to develop a clear picture of where minorities and women are in the workforce.

The Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) already produces extensive breakdowns of its data by race, ethnicity, and gender, including employment and unemployment data. The introduction of dependent interviewing, in which information from previous interviews is made available to the person conducting the current month's interview, is a major step toward eliminating month-to-month changes in occupational employment

estimates in the Current Population Survey (CPS). Another part of the CPS redesign improved BLS's ability to identify those individuals engaged in labor market activity, particularly women.

[See also C.1. for National Centers of Excellence in Women's Health.]

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT

Trend data show that the percentage of women at the highest career levels and in the Senior Executive Service has doubled in the last ten years. According to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, this demonstrates that the glass ceiling for organizational leadership positions is being raised for federally-employed women and this trend is likely to continue.

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS (Executive Branch Data)

	9/30/79			9/30/89			9/30/95			9/31/96		
	Total	Women	Percent	Total	Women	Percent	Total	Women	Percent	Total	Women	Percent
SES	6,780	348	5.1%	7,305	741	10.1%	7,294	1,369	18.8%	7,183	1,402	19.5%
SL, ST, Other	1,009	62	6.1%	926	78	8.4%	1,003	134	13.3%	1,014	141	13.9%
Executive Schedule	430	58	13.5%	399	80	20.1%	510	152	29.8%	499	149	29.9%
TOTAL	8,219	468	5.7%	8,630	899	10.4%	8,807	1,655	18.8%	8,696	1,692	19.5%

Source: Executive Information System, Office Of Executive Resources, OPM

OTHER STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Programs (CDP)

	Total	Women	Percent
CDP Graduates (7/31/79 through 9/30/95)	2,063	467	22.6%
CDP Graduates (7/31/97 through 9/30/95)	124	33	26.6%

Source: Executive Information System, Office Of Executive Resources, OPM

Feeder Groups (as of 9/30/95)

	Total	Women	Percent
GS-15	38,565	7,033	18.2%
GS-14	81,559	17,503	21.5%
GS-13	160,902	43,692	27.2%

G.2. Increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

The Department of Education (ED) is committed to increasing opportunities for girls and women to have access to leadership opportunities and participate in decision-making. The ED has taken the following actions that support this priority:

- **Grants.** Recent ED grants will provide women with training and experience in leadership development and self-sufficiency.
- **Roundtable meeting.** On February 21, 1996, the ED hosted a roundtable meeting with governmental and non-governmental organizations, educators, and student leaders that discussed leadership issues for women and girls.
- **Projects.** The Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) supports projects at institutions of higher education that foster increased women's leadership.

Employee Development. ED has implemented a leadership program to provide training and other leadership opportunities for Women in Civil Service GS-11/12.

FUTURE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION INITIATIVES

- ❖ **International Leadership Forum for Women with Disabilities.** The ED will support an international leadership forum for women with disabilities to be held in June 1997 that will address overcoming obstacles of employment, education, adequate health care and other issues, and will develop leadership skills in women with disabilities from all over the world.
- ❖ **Establish a Coalition on Women's Leadership and Encourage Policies and Practices that Increases Leadership Positions for Women.** The Department of Education will foster collaboration among federal and state agencies, educational institutions (including schools of business and public administration), education associations, and other stakeholders that have successfully implemented, or are in the process of implementing, women's leadership training programs and professional development programs. This would facilitate an ongoing dialogue and forum for sharing models of successful programs as well as the development and dissemination of strategies targeted to creating more opportunities for girls and women to learn, develop and expand leadership skills in their schools, businesses and respective communities. Through this effort the ED will also address strategies for encouraging women to pursue and retain careers in all levels of education with the objective of increased representation of women in leadership roles in education.

Encourage the Expansion of Leadership Opportunities for Girls and Women at the Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary School Levels. The Department of Education will encourage the creation and expansion of opportunities for elementary, secondary and postsecondary school girls and women to participate in skill-building leadership projects and programs in their schools and communities, and to see a more varied range of mentors and peers in leadership roles and organized activities. The ED will also encourage ongoing initiatives that give women the opportunity to gain confidence and foster their leadership skills.

[See also the discussion of training as a component of USDA programs under G.1. above.]

[See strategic objective A.1. regarding HUD's efforts to encourage formation of public housing Resident Management Corporations.]

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AS AN EMPLOYER

The U.S. Government's goal is to enhance the selection, development, and management of U.S. Government executives to ensure that they possess the executive qualifications required to provide leadership in today's dynamic environment of constant change and advancing technology. This is an ongoing effort that has been recognized as a critical initiative by the President's Management Council, the National Performance Review, senior executives, human resources managers, and others in the U.S. Government community. Enhancing selection programs and development opportunities for all U.S. Government executives, managers, supervisors, and candidates for these positions will improve the status of women within the federal workforce.

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Office of Executive Resources, has primary responsibility for this effort and OPM is taking the following actions:

Refine the qualifications criteria and selection process for senior executive positions to ensure that they produce candidates who have the leadership skills and experience needed to manage effectively and respond to the challenges facing the U.S. Government today and tomorrow.

Promote ongoing development of current and potential executives through various means, such as formal/informal training, seminars and forums, and mobility assignments to ensure that executives are prepared to meet increasing leadership challenges and technology demands.

Department of State anti-discrimination measures. In settling a class action lawsuit brought by female Foreign Service Officers, the Department of State has adopted several measures designed to correct any underlying practices in the Foreign Service that could have a discriminatory effect:

Council on Equality in the Workplace. Chaired by the Under Secretary for Management and involving every Assistant Secretary, the Council engages all Department personnel in an annual examination of real and perceived barriers to advancement;

Awards Working Group. Appointed annually by the Director General, the group reviews the results of the Superior Honors Awards program in light of gender and racial composition of the workforce;

Job Analysis. The analysis identifies the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to increase the objectivity of employee performance evaluations.

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

Agricultural Programs. USDA promotes women's access to decision-making positions in its activities abroad. For example:

The cooperative Farm Privatization Project near St. Petersburg, Russia, includes leadership and organizational development training for women in youth development activities.

The Polish/American Extension Project, designed to assist Poland in restructuring and revitalizing its extension system, trains leaders for Poland's youth program, a majority of them women.

Political participation. The State Department is supporting an Asia Foundation program to empower Asian women to overcome economic, social and political discrimination. A significant portion of the project will provide women with the skills and confidence to run for political office through the provision of training and educational programs. Furthermore the project will help target discriminatory laws and assist women in changing them.

The Population, Refugees and Migration Bureau of the State Department, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, funded voter registration for refugees temporarily residing in the U.S. so those refugees could participate in their home country's elections, such as the recent elections in Bosnia.

[See also I.3. for USA's Women's Legal Rights Initiative.]

H. Institutional Mechanisms for Women



Platform for Action Strategic Objectives:

- H.1. Create or strengthen national mechanisms and other governmental bodies.
- H.2. Integrate gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programs, and projects.
- H.3. Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation.

H.1. Create or strengthen national mechanisms and other governmental bodies.

THE PRESIDENT'S INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON WOMEN

- ◆ President Clinton established the Interagency Council to follow up on the UN Fourth World Conference on Women held in September 1995. The Council consists of high-level representatives from the federal agencies working within government to develop policies for the advancement of women and girls. It also engages in public education and outreach to support the successful implementation of the Platform for Action and solicit the views of non-governmental organizations.
- ◆ **National conference via satellite.** On September 28, 1996, the Council sponsored a national conference via satellite to report on progress made, share what's working in local communities, and hear from participants about their ideas to improve the lives of women and their families. The satellite broadcast was received by approximately 400 sites around the country.
- ◆ **Work within federal agencies.** Interagency Council members work within their individual agencies, usually through a task force or working group established for this purpose, to analyze the Platform for Action as it relates to their agency's mission and

work, with an eye towards identifying possible new initiatives. Agencies that have established internal task forces to work on implementation of the Platform for Action in their agency's mission and internal operations include: the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Education, Health and Human Services, Interior, and Justice, and the Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Information Agency.

- ◆ **Work with NGOs.** Many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been in contact with the Council regarding their own follow-up activities and commitments to implement the Platform for Action; they have also communicated to the Council actions they would like to see the government take. As appropriate, such communications are taken up with the appropriate Council agency representatives. And Council members have been engaging in outreach activities across the country, attending conferences and meetings, participating on panels, and addressing gatherings.
- ◆ **Internet Web site.** Information on federal agency follow-up to the World Conference is available on the Council's Internet home page at:
<http://secretary.state.gov/www/iacw/index.html>

WHITE HOUSE OFFICE FOR WOMEN'S INITIATIVES AND OUTREACH

The White House Office for Women's Initiatives and Outreach was established by President Clinton in June 1995 to serve as a liaison between the White House and women's organizations.

- ◆ **Roundtable discussions.** "At the Table" is a series of roundtable discussions across the country between women and Administration officials from various federal agencies. They are designed to ensure that women's voices are heard in the White House and that women learn about the resources available in the federal government that can help their daily lives. More than 400 roundtables have been held to date, involving thousands of women across the country. Topics have included domestic violence, reproductive health and rights, affirmative action, education, health care, access to capital, and child care. A report of each roundtable is sent to the Office for Women's Initiatives and Outreach where its ideas and proposals are summarized before being forwarded to the President and White House policymakers.
- ◆ **Fact Sheets.** The Office for Women's Initiatives and Outreach has produced fact sheets on important actions the Administration has taken for women and families. Fact sheets include: Expanding Opportunities for America's Families; Making Our Homes and Communities Safer; Investing in Education and Training for Our Families; Expanding Access to Quality Health Care; Promoting Reproductive Health Services for Women; Caring for Our Children; Generating Business and Economic Opportunities for Women; and Supporting Women as Partners in Decision Making.
- ◆ **OWIO Internet Web site.** The Office for Women's Initiatives and Outreach Web site can be reached at:<http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/EOP/Women/OWIO/index.html>

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

❖ **USDA Committee on the Status of Women.** USDA is working to develop a mechanism for ensuring that monitoring and promotion of the goals of the Platform will continue beyond the life of the task force described above. The task force has proposed an ongoing USDA Committee on the Status of Women, to be established by Executive Order of the Secretary. The Committee, composed of two groups, would promote both the adoption of Platform objectives as criteria for program evaluation within USDA and the use of gender-based data to monitor and evaluate existing programs:

- A high-level group of officials from each mission area will provide policy review, guidance, and oversight of USDA's implementation of the Platform. It will be responsible for reviewing the biennial report prepared by the monitoring group discussed below, recommending further actions, and providing policy guidance as needed.
- A monitoring group, consisting of representatives from each mission area chosen by their respective Under or Assistant Secretary, will be primarily responsible for producing a biennial report to the Secretary on the USDA's progress in implementing the Platform. This report will review USDA agencies' progress and identify possible new initiatives.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Interagency Working Group on Unwaged Work. In 1995, the Department of Commerce established an interagency working group to address issues involved in measuring and valuing unwaged or nonmarket work. It is composed of representatives of the DOC, the Department of Labor, and the Small Business Administration.

❖ **DOC Federal Women's Program Manager.** A Federal Women's Program Manager at the Departmental level will be appointed to develop appropriate policies and strategies for identifying patterns of discrimination against women employees; strive to reduce employment problems women encounter at DOC; enhance the status of women employees; and serve as the focal point for women employee's issues. (The Federal Women's Program was established in 1962 by Presidential Executive Order 11478. Various offices and agencies of DOC have staff who serve as the Federal Women's Program Manager for their respective organizations. However, DOC's Federal Women's Program has not been centralized or staffed at the DOC level.)

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services. DACOWITS was established 45 years ago to make recommendations to improve the utilization and quality of life for women. It continues to evaluate and make recommendations on women's issues, regularly reviewing policy decisions and garnering field input in the analysis of women in the military.

- ❖ **DoD Internal Task Force on Women's Issues.** The DoD will establish a task force made up of DoD Federal Women's Program managers, including those located in field locations (outside DoD headquarters). This task force will work on implementing the 1995 World Conference on Women Platform for Action throughout DoD, dealing with issues related to the Department of Defense as an employer.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Special Assistant for Gender Equity. In May 1995, the Deputy Secretary of Education appointed a Special Assistant for Gender Equity, as authorized by the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994. Pursuant to the legislation, the Special Assistant promotes, coordinates, and evaluates gender equity programs, including information dissemination, technical assistance, and coordination of research activities. The Special Assistant advises the Secretary and Deputy Secretary on all matters relating to gender equity. This position is located in the office of the Deputy Secretary. The Special Assistant is also the ED's Federal Women's Program Coordinator.

Equity Task Force. Founded in 1993 by the Deputy Secretary, the Equity Task Force's purpose is to advise the Secretary and Deputy Secretary on all matters related to ensuring that equity is an integral part of all ED programs and management practices. (The Task Force defines 'equity' as access and participation regardless of special characteristics including but not limited to gender, race, color, national origin, disability, and age.) Committee members work on a variety of issues, including drafting legislation and conducting outreach activities (e.g., hosting conferences and meetings and developing publications and related materials).

WEEA Equity Resources Center. The ED, through its WEEA (Women's Educational Equity Act) Program supports this national information and technical assistance center with its toll-free telephone number (1-800-225-3088) Web site and listservs.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service Office of Women's Health. For the first time, all HHS agencies and regions have established offices or coordinators for women's health. These offices work collaboratively with the PHS Office of Women's Health, which coordinates research, service delivery, and education programs across HHS agencies. The office is headed by the HHS Deputy Assistant Secretary for Women's Health.

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Women's Health. This new senior-level position was created in 1994 to coordinate and stimulate research, service delivery and education activities across HHS and to work with other government agencies, consumer and health care professional groups to advance women's health.

Federal Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Environment and Women's Health. In 1994, the PHS Office of Women's Health established this interagency committee to focus on

how home, work, and atmospheric pollutants, exogenous hormones, and other environmental factors may contribute to the risk of diseases in women. The committee has created an inventory of federal programs in this area.

- ❖ **National Women's Health Information Center.** A comprehensive resource clearinghouse is being established to provide the public, health care professionals, and researchers with state-of-the-art federal and private sector information about women's health via a toll-free number and the Internet.

National Women's Resource Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Alcohol, Tobacco, and other Drug Abuse, and Mental Illness. This center was created in FY 1994 by two HHS agencies, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the Health Resources and Services Administration.

National Policy and Resource Center on Women and Aging. In February 1995, HHS's Administration on Aging awarded \$1.1 million for a three-year cooperative agreement with Brandeis University to establish the National Policy and Resource Center on Women and Aging. The Center's goals include:

- Identifying issues and expanding knowledge on income security, health, caregiving, and housing as they relate to older women.
 - Educating and providing technical assistance to the Aging Network, which consists of 57 state offices on aging, 670 area agencies on aging, 228 tribal organizations, 5,000 senior centers, and over 25,000 service providers, women's organizations, and policymakers.
 - Promoting greater national understanding of contributions, concerns, and needs of America's older women through education and outreach.
- ◆ **National Domestic Violence Hotline.** Established in February 1996, the toll-free number is 1-800-799-SAFE. It provides crisis assistance and local shelter referrals to victims of domestic violence throughout the United States.

Federal Multi-Agency Consortium on Imaging Technologies to Improve Women's Health. The PHS Office on Women's Health chairs the consortium of representatives from the Departments of Defense, Commerce, Energy, and HHS, and NASA and the CIA. It is developing collaborations to improve imaging technologies for the early detection of diseases in women. An inventory of imaging technologies from these agencies that have the potential to be applied to improve disease detection has been prepared.

- ◆ **HHS Internal Task Force.** In early 1996, HHS, at the Secretary's direction, established a task force to further implementation of the Platform for Action adopted at the 1995 World Conference on Women:
 - Analyze HHS's current and projected policies and programs in terms of the Platform.
 - Identify new initiatives HHS could take to advance the overall agenda of improving the lives of women and girls.
 - Think towards long-range institutionalized changes to complete this process.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

◆ **Department of the Interior Council on Women.** In late 1995, the Department of the Interior formed a Council on Women to promote implementation of the 1995 World Conference on Women Platform for Action in DOI's work. The Council has a two-fold purpose:

- Pursue creative approaches to promote gender equity and improve the quality of life of DOI constituents and employees.
- Respond to and provide for the needs of women and their families through protection and conservation of the nation's natural and cultural resources.

At the beginning of each fiscal year, the Council on Women will identify pilot project(s) to address one or more issues that will help implement the Platform for Action. A Women's Working Group, selected from DOI bureaus and offices, will analyze DOI's mission and function in relation to the issue, evaluate current operating procedures, seek public involvement where appropriate, and craft an innovative approach to address the issue. Upon completion, the pilot project(s) will be evaluated and implementing recommendations made. The ultimate goal of these pilot projects is their evolution into a permanent program.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Violence Against Women Office. The Department of Justice's Violence Against Women Office was created in March 1995. It leads a comprehensive national effort to combine tough new federal laws with assistance to states and localities to fight domestic violence and other crimes against women. It is responsible for the overall coordination and focus of DOJ efforts to combat violence against women and serves as the DOJ's primary point of contact with other federal agencies, state and local governments, outside organizations, and Congress. Within DOJ, it works with the COPS (Community Oriented Policing) program and with community police officers to help reduce domestic violence and other crimes against women in America's neighborhoods.

Advisory Council on Violence Against Women. An Advisory Council on Violence Against Women was created in July 1995. Co-chaired by the Attorney General and HHS Secretary, the council consists of 47 experts (representatives from law enforcement, media, business, health and social services, victim advocacy, and survivors) helping to steer new efforts to prevent violence against women.

◆ **Interagency Working Group on Violence Against Women.** The Director of DOJ's Violence Against Women Office convened the Interagency Working Group consisting of a representative of each federal agency appointed by that agency's Chief of Staff in September 1995. This group is intended to be a vehicle for communication among the agencies regarding efforts to combat violence against women.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

The Women's Bureau. The Women's Bureau was created by Congress in 1920 and given the mandate, "to formulate standards and policies which shall promote the welfare of wage-earning women, improve their working conditions, increase their efficiency, and advance their opportunities for profitable employment." The Women's Bureau sees its mission into the foreseeable future as:

- informing working women about Women's Bureau programs and initiatives that benefit them;
- providing information to, and receiving information from, women about economic issues and their economic and social status;
- providing reliable, useful information to policymakers;
- building partnerships with other agencies within the DOL and throughout government, as well as with unions, non-profits, businesses, community-based organizations, and working women themselves; and
- impacting workplace policies at all levels.

The Work and Family Clearinghouse. The Women's Bureau established the Work and Family Clearinghouse in 1989. The Clearinghouse is a computerized data base of employer-sponsored dependent care programs, policies, and support information. In addition, the Clearinghouse offers references, including a formal network of organizations, a bibliography, upcoming conferences, policy issues, and statistics. The Clearinghouse can be reached by calling 1-800-827-5335.

In 1990, the Women's Bureau established the Workforce Quality section of the Work and Family Clearinghouse. It is an employer-focused data base of programs and policies that go beyond dependent care. Its data base includes a selection of exemplary employer-sponsored workplace programs that have been implemented to increase the competitiveness of the work force and the efficiency of the worker. Areas covered include: alternative work schedules and staffing; employee recruitment, development, retention, and promotion; employee involvement in decision making; training; and workplace diversity, including glass ceiling issues.

- ◆ **The Fair Pay Clearinghouse.** In September 1996, the Women's Bureau launched the Fair Pay Clearinghouse to provide easily accessible information on how women are achieving fair pay where they work. Over 130 organizations, including community organizations, business associations, labor unions, women's groups, and others, have joined the Fair Pay Clearinghouse to provide information to the public. Workers, employers, and organizations can call 1-800-347-3741, or visit the Internet Web site: <http://www.dol.gov/dol/wb>

U.S. Representative to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Working Party on the Role of Women in the Economy. The Director of the Women's Bureau represents the U.S. on this international body and, for the past five years, has

been one of its elected vice presidents. The leadership of the Working Party is generally responsible for setting the Party's basic agenda and moving it along, including providing additional resources when needed. The purpose of the Working Party is to provide policy studies that can result in changes in legislation or other approaches to concerns of women in the labor force in the OECD's 27 member countries.

- ❖ The most recent study, coming to completion by the end of 1997, is on the future of women's employment in traditional occupations, with case studies such as that of secretarial occupations. The U.S. is participating in this cross-national study.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Senior Coordinator for International Women's Issues. Established in 1994, this senior position, located in the Office of the Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs, is responsible for integrating issues of concern to women, including those issues outlined in the Platform for Action adopted at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women, into the U.S. foreign policy agenda.

U.S. Representative to the UN Commission on the Status of Women. The UN Commission on the Status of Women, representing 45 UN member states, meets annually in New York City to formulate guidelines on actions to improve women's status in the economic, social, cultural, and educational fields. The U.S. Representative to the UNCSW heads U.S. delegations to UNCSW meetings. The Officer in Charge of International Women's Issues, located in the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, assists the U.S. Representative to the UNCSW in fulfilling UNCSW functions.

U.S. Representative to the Inter-American Commission on the Status of Women (CIM) of the Organization of American States. The CIM was established in 1928 to ensure recognition of the civil and political rights of women in the Americas. The U.S. Representative to the CIM heads U.S. delegations to CIM meetings. The position of the Alternative Representative to the OAS and the CIM assists the U.S. Representative to the CIM in fulfilling CIM functions. This position is located in the U.S. Permanent Mission to the OAS.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

The Center for Women Veterans. The mission of the Center for Women Veterans is to assure women veterans receive benefits and services on a par with male veterans; to ensure women encounter no discrimination in accessing VA services; to ensure that women are treated with respect and dignity by VA service providers; and, to be the primary advisor to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on all matters, programs, issues and initiatives for and affecting women veterans.

The Advisory Committee on Women Veterans. The committee was established by Congress in 1983 and is comprised of individuals actively involved in veterans issues. The committee is

charged by law to: assess the needs of women veterans with respect to compensation, health care, rehabilitation, outreach, and other benefits and programs administered by Veterans Affairs; review the programs and activities of Veterans Affairs designed to meet these needs; make recommendations for appropriate action, and follow-up on the recommendations.

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Office of Women in Development. In 1974, USAID established the Women in Development (WID) office to help ensure that women participate fully, and benefit equally, from U.S. overseas development assistance. Under its current strategic plan, the WID office is supporting efforts to:

- Enhance the economic status of women throughout the developing world.
- Expand educational opportunities for girls.
- Improve women's legal and property rights and increase their participation in governance and civil society.
- Integrate gender issues throughout USAID regional and country programs.

- ◆ **The Gender Plan of Action.** In March 1996, the Administrator of USAID announced a new Gender Plan of Action — an agency-wide blueprint designed to ensure that gender consideration are institutionalized throughout USAID development programs and projects. Highlights of the Plan include:
 - Modification of the USAID strategic framework so that strategic objectives reflect the central role of women in development.
 - Better data collection and analysis, including indicators to measure impact on the social and economic status of women.
 - Revision of personnel policies so that:
 - position descriptions for program officers and project development officers specifically include responsibility for addressing gender issues;
 - future recruitment for these positions will emphasize the need for candidates to have experience and understanding of gender issues;
 - attention to gender issues will be part of the evaluation process used by staff and committees rating the performance of civil service and foreign service personnel, as well as by boards that select foreign service personnel for promotion.
 - Staff training and technical assistance to help strengthen staff knowledge of gender issues.
 - New guidelines for USAID grantees and contractors requiring grant applicants to demonstrate their abilities to address gender issues.
 - Enhanced USAID policy.

- USAID's guide to operational policy under federal regulations, the "Automatic Directives System," will incorporate language specifying that strategic planning and results-reporting documents address gender issues.
- Each mission will be required to review and revise its "mission orders" to ensure that gender issues are considered at all appropriate points in the process of planning, achieving and evaluating program results.
- Establishment of a WID Performance Fund to award supplementary funds to USAID development programs that best address gender issues.
- The implementation of a WID fellows program designed to help build a technical cadre to support the integration of gender issues in development.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[See Federal Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Environment and Women's Health under HHS.]

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Office of Women's Business Ownership. The SBA Office of Women's Business Ownership was established by Executive Order in 1979 and made permanent by statute in 1994. Its mission is to foster the success of women entrepreneurs, and it engages in advocacy and outreach to the almost eight million women business owners across the country.

Interagency Committee on Women's Business Enterprise. The Interagency Committee on Women's Business Enterprise, established in 1994, ensures that women entrepreneurs' success is considered by each federal agency. The Committee works in cooperation with the congressionally-established National Women's Business Council.

H.2. Integrate gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programs, and projects.

CONFERENCES, MEETINGS, AND SURVEYS TO EXCHANGE VIEWS WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND THE PUBLIC:

PRESIDENT'S INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON WOMEN

- ◆ **"America's Commitment: The UN Women's Conference One Year Later."** The President's Interagency Council on Women's national conference via satellite (September 28, 1996). Through it women around the country, at approximately 400 sites, organized their own events and participated in the national conference through satellite downlink, telephone call-ins and fax.

WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF WOMEN'S INITIATIVES AND OUTREACH

- ◆ **“At the Table.”** White House Office of Women’s Initiatives and Outreach roundtable discussions across the country (beginning in 1995). More than 400 roundtables have been held to date, involving thousands of women across the country. Topics have included domestic violence, reproductive health and rights, affirmative action, education, health care, access to capital, and child care.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

“Fifth Conference on Rural and Farm Women in Historical Perspective.” (December 1994). This conference brought together women who study rural and farm women and women who live and work on farms and in rural communities.

- ❖ **“National Symposium for Women in Food, Agriculture, and Rural Communities.”**
To increase its interactions with women in agriculture and rural communities, USDA is assessing the feasibility of organizing and hosting a National Symposium for Women in Food, Agriculture, and Rural Communities as the centerpiece of USDA’s response to the Beijing conference. The primary purpose of the symposium would be to share information about USDA program, grant, and contracting opportunities and receive feedback on how well USDA programs are serving women and how they can be improved. USDA would solicit the broadest participation from women in farming, farm labor, farm services, food and consumer advocacy, natural resources, research, agribusiness, and rural communities.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

- ◆ **“Women and Girls in Education. What’s Working in Schools and Communities”** (July 16, 1996). This national town hall meeting, a live interactive teleconference with satellite down-links around the country, addressed mathematics, science and technology, and leadership for women and girls, looking at educational programs and community efforts to improve gender equity in education.
- ❖ **“International Leadership Forum for Women with Disabilities.”** This Forum (to be held in Washington, D.C., June 15-20, 1997) will address overcoming obstacles to employment, education, adequate health care, and other issues, and will develop leadership skills.
- ❖ **Title IX Anniversary.** President Clinton will mark the 25th anniversary of Title IX in June 1997 at a White House event and will announce future steps the federal government will take to enforce Title IX. Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational institutions or programs which receive federal financial assistance. The Department of Education will be working with its staff, contractors and grantees, and non-governmental organizations to help educators and the public understand the achievements and potential of this mandate.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

“Secretary’s Conference to Establish a National Action Plan on Breast Cancer.” (1993).

This conference brought together — for the first time — 300 advocates, families and women affected by the disease, clinicians, researchers, members of Congress, other government officials, educators, and the media, united in their commitment to develop a comprehensive plan for fighting breast cancer.

- ◆ **Canada-U.S. Forum on Women’s Health.** The Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Minister of Health (Canada) convened a forum in August 1996 in Ottawa to develop binational initiatives in women’s health. Four joint initiatives in the areas of breast cancer, research, information clearinghouses and smoking were announced.
- ◆ **The U.S. -Mexico Binational Commission’s Health Working Group’s Core Group on Women’s Health.** The group was established in 1996 to facilitate exchange of information and to develop joint projects on women’s health.
- ◆ **National Minority Women’s Health Conference.”** (January 1997.)
[See C.1. for description.]

Healthy Women 2000 Conference. A series sponsored by the Public Health Service Office on Women’s Health that includes:

- ◆ The Loss of Women’s Minds: Advances in Understanding and Treating Alzheimer’s Disease
- ◆ Unlocking the Mysteries: AutoImmune Disease in Women
- ◆ Having a Heart to Heart: The Truth About Women, Heart Disease and Stroke
- ◆ Mind/Body Interactions in Health and Disease
- ◆ Clearing the Air: Smoking, Girls and Young Women’s Health
- ◆ Safeguarding Women’s Health: Preventing and Treating Diseases of the Reproductive System
- ◆ Everything Women Need to Know About Nutrition and Health.
- ❖ Future conferences scheduled include a conference on menopause and osteoporosis (May 6, 1997), breast cancer (June 1997), managed care (September 1997), violence against women (October 1997), and cancers in women (November 1997). Conferences on general women’s health will also be held in locations around the country: Chicago (July 1997), San Francisco (August 1997), Atlanta (September 1997), and Los Angeles (November 1997).
- ◆ **First National Leadership Conference on Physical Activity and Women’s Health.** The PHS Office of Women’s Health, in collaboration with the President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the American College of Sports Medicine, convened this conference in February 1997 in Washington, D.C. which provided state-of-the-art information about the role of fitness

plays in women's health. It results in recommendations for action relevant to women of all ages and physical abilities.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

"Women Thinking Globally, Acting Locally: On the Road to Beijing and the 21st Century" (ten U.S. regional preparatory meetings for the UN Fourth World Conference on Women, organized by the Women's Bureau and convened by the DOL and the State Department in 1994).

"Working Women Count: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" (Women's Bureau 75th Anniversary Conference, 1995). This Conference focused on the issues women identified in the 1994 Working Women Count! national survey: improving pay and benefits, building the family-friendly workplace, and valuing women and women's work.

- ◆ "Forced Labor: The Prostitution of Children" (International Labor Affairs Bureau)
- ◆ "Don't Work in the Dark" Regional Working Women's Summits (Women's Bureau)
- ◆ "Workplace Violence Forum" (Occupational Safety and Health Administration)
- ❖ National Working Women's Summit, "Economic Equity: Realities, Responsibilities and Rewards," (Women's Bureau, to be held June 5, 1997).

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Senior State Department officials, including the Senior Coordinator for International Women's Issues, regularly meet with women's non-governmental organizations at the State Department and at embassies and missions on an ongoing basis, bringing them into the policy process.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

- ◆ Second National Conference on Women's Travel Issues (October 23-25, 1996).
Conference objectives included:
 - bringing together and synthesizing the best work from a variety of disciplines on the travel patterns, needs, and attitudes of women and their families, with emphasis on traditionally underrepresented or minority women and households;
 - evaluating the planning and policy implications of these findings; and
 - identifying areas in need of additional research and suggesting a series of research questions.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

"Women Thinking Locally, Acting Globally: On the Road to Beijing and the 21st Century," tenth U.S. preparatory meeting for the 1995 UN World Conference on Women, with a special focus on women and the environment (November 1994, Oakland, CA).

LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS

- ❖ Department of Agriculture. The USDA will explicitly consider the gender-neutrality of agricultural legislation proposed by the Administration, and regulations written by USDA, to ensure that women have equal access to programs and decision-making opportunities.

H.3. Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

The Department of Commerce Census Bureau's mission is to collect accurate, timely, and relevant data to help inform public and private decision making. The Bureau conducts a number of census and surveys that collect gender-specific data. Examples include:

- **The Decennial Census of Population and Housing.** This Census provides a statistical profile of the nation, producing a complete count of the population and describing the demographic, social, economic, and housing characteristics of the U.S. population.
- **The Survey of Income and Program Participation.** SIPP is one of the major sources of information on the demographic and economic situation of U.S. households, families, and individuals. SIPP's purposes are to measure their economic situation, especially changes over time, and to provide a tool for evaluating the effectiveness of government transfer programs. The survey has been designed to provide a broader context for analysis by periodically adding questions on a variety of topics not covered in the core section. These topics include personal history, child care, wealth, child support, disability, school enrollment, taxes, and annual income.
- **The Women-Owned Business Survey.** This Survey provides summary statistics for the U.S., states, and sub-state areas with 100 or more women-owned firms. Data include number of firms, gross receipts, employees, and annual payroll; and are tabulated by two-digit Standard Industrial Classification codes, location, size, and legal form of organization. The survey is conducted as part of the economic censuses.
- **The Agricultural Census.** This Census, conducted every five years by the Census Bureau and analyzed by researchers in the Department of Agriculture, began collecting gender-based data in 1978. A gender-based analysis of these data identified the trend toward increasing numbers of female farm operators.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Annual Economic Survey of Farms. The Agricultural Census is a jointly authorized program, funded and directed by the Department of Agriculture. Since 1991, gender-based data has been

collected in USDA's annual economic survey of farms, permitting analyses of women's economic contribution to agricultural production and the support of farm households.

- ❖ As new initiatives, USDA will evaluate the impact of alternative definitions of farm operators for their ability to support comprehensive research on women's roles in agriculture and take steps, such as oversampling female farm operators, to increase the usefulness of gender-based data for research. An effort to over-sample female farm operators would greatly expand the amount of gender-based information which could be reliably reported from the annual economy survey of farms.
- ❖ **Gender Disaggregation of All Individual Data Collected by USDA.** To help strengthen women's voice in the formation of food and agricultural policy, and increase the visibility of women in agriculture, USDA will ensure that all individual data collected by USDA include information on gender, and that these data are analyzed and reported by gender. USDA will maintain and make available to the public gender-based information on employment within USDA and on boards and committees convened by USDA.

Data on Higher Education Enrollment. Access to higher education in agricultural areas of study is a critical avenue to increasing representation of women in agricultural policy and management positions and to integrating gender perspectives in farm legislation and public policies and programs. The Department of Agriculture maintains gender-based data on annual enrollments and degrees earned in the food and agricultural sciences to evaluate progress in women's representation in these areas.

Research on Farm and Rural Women. Over the last several years, a small number of studies conducted by USDA social scientists have increased USDA's knowledge of women's roles and participation in U.S. agriculture. Studies have focused on women farm operators and landowners, the intergenerational transfer of agricultural land, and the blending of farm and off-farm work in farm households. Other current and planned projects include:

- A management and time allocation study of women principal and joint farm operators.
- An examination of the social and economic status of women outside urban areas.
- An employment and earnings study of hired farm workers using gender-disaggregated data.
- ❖ The USDA will conduct a study of gender bias in farm programs. Farms operated by women are on average smaller and have lower household incomes than male-operated farms. And, despite recent rule changes, women continue to be underrepresented in some farm programs. For example, women hold only 2 percent of all USDA farm ownership loans. Researchers in USDA have proposed a study investigating the effects of the recent rule changes on both women's participation in farm programs and the economic effects of these changes on farms operated by women.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The National Center for Education Statistics tries to collect and report its information by sex and race. It has also developed some specific publications which address women such as: “Findings from the Condition of Education 1995: The Educational Progress of Women” (NCES 96-768) and “Women: Education and Outcomes” (NCES 96-061).

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

- ◆ **Women’s Homeownership Statistics.** HUD’s National Partnership in Homeownership program launched the Homeownership for Women (HOW) initiative in June 1996. As part of this initiative, HUD will track the women’s homeownership rate on a quarterly rather than an annual basis.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Labor Force Surveys. For over 30 years, the Bureau of Labor Statistics has collected and disseminated employment statistics on women on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis. Such data are published by age, race, and marital and family status (presence and age of children). Earnings data for women are also published by occupation, industry, hours of work, and other variables. Geographic detail on women’s employment status is also published. In addition to data based on the monthly labor force survey, BLS has recently begun to analyze and publish findings from the National Longitudinal Survey. These data show how women’s labor force and employment status changes with age, and appropriate attention is paid to the child-bearing years.

Several years ago, BLS revised its labor force survey. It used new developments in cognitive theory to design, test, and evaluate labor force questions. The results of this process, combined with up-to-date computer technology, produce more accurate and timely statistics on the labor force experience of women.

BLS also provides technical assistance to users and policy makers who need to understand methodologies and interpret the data in its social and economic context. Assistance is provided both informally to individuals, and formally as lectures and seminars to data-user groups. Training in statistical methods and analysis is provided to persons from many countries as part of the BLS program of international training.

[See descriptions of other gender-related research in A.4, B.4, C.4, D.1 and D.2, G.1, and K.3.]

I. Human Rights of Women



Platform for Action Strategic Objectives:

- I.1. Promote and protect the human rights of women, through the full implementation of all human rights instruments, especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.
- I.2. Ensure equality and non-discrimination under the law and in practice.
- I.3. Achieve legal literacy.

I.1. Promote and protect the human rights of women, through the full implementation of all human rights instruments, especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

CONVENTIONS

THE UN CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW):

The ratification of this women's human rights treaty is the Administration's top priority among human rights treaties presently awaiting advice and consent by the U.S. Senate. On Human Rights Day, December 10, 1996, President Clinton reaffirmed his commitment to ratification and called upon the Senate to act:

"Today, I call upon the Senate, again, to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. As you know, many, many, many other nations have done this. In our country where we have worked so hard against domestic violence, where we have worked so hard to empower women, it is, to say the least, an embarrassment that the United States has not done this, and there is no excuse for this situation to continue."

The Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women. The Department of Justice approved the U.S. becoming a signatory to this treaty of the Organization of American States. The Departments of Justice and State will continue to consult.

ILO CONVENTION 111 CONCERNING EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION:

Convention 111 of the International Labour Organization requires the ratifying country to “undertake to declare and pursue a national policy designed to promote... equality of opportunity and treatment in respect of employment and occupation...” The convention aims to eliminate discrimination in employment based on race, color, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction, and social origin.

In 1996, the Tripartite Advisory Panel on International Labor Standards (TAPILS), which considers whether the U.S. should ratify conventions of the International Labor Organization (ILO), completed its legal review of and recommended to the President’s Committee on the ILO that the President seek Senate ratification of ILO Convention 111 concerning Employment Discrimination.

Currently, the interested governmental agencies are reviewing the convention. The President should be able to send the convention to the U.S. Senate for its advice and consent in 1997.

IMMIGRATION AND REQUESTS FOR POLITICAL ASYLUM

- ❖ **Coercive Family Planning Practices.** The Immigration and Naturalization Service is implementing a new law which provides that a person who has been forced to abort a pregnancy or to undergo involuntary sterilization, or who has been persecuted for failure or refusal to undergo such a procedure or for other resistance to a coercive population control program, shall be deemed to have been persecuted on account of a political opinion for purposes of granting asylum. This law replaces INS’ program for special administrative review of claims by nationals of the People’s Republic of China involving coercive family planning.

Battered spouses and children. INS published an interim rule in May 1996 under the Violence Against Women Act allowing battered spouses and children of citizens or legal permanent residents to self-petition to become legal permanent residents themselves. Under this new procedure, family members who would otherwise be eligible for permanent residency will no longer be forced to rely on an abuser to remain in the United States.

- ❖ INS will implement its newly published interim rule and review the comments it receives. INS has announced that it will centralize the filing of all self-petitions in its Vermont Service Center in order to ensure that these petitions are reviewed expeditiously by experienced senior INS personnel.

Gender Guidelines and Training. In May 1995, INS issued Asylum Gender Guidelines, which provide Asylum Officers with substantive guidance on the principles of American asylum law that bear on gender-related cases, such as domestic and sexual abuse, but they do not enlarge or expand the grounds for asylum under current law. The Guidelines also address procedural matters such as the desirability of female interviewers and interpreters, when available, and the need to provide for interviews outside the hearing of other family members, especially male relatives and children.

INS will continue to use the Gender Guidelines in asylum cases. Every INS Asylum Officer now receives four hours of specialized training on asylum claims involving gender-related violence.

Female Genital Mutilation. INS urged the Board of Immigration Appeals to recognize that, in some cases, fear of being subjected to female genital mutilation (FGM) may be a basis for asylum.

- ◆ On June 13, 1996, the BIA issued a precedent-setting decision that FGM may be a basis for asylum.
- ❖ Subject to the BIA's ruling, INS will recognize that certain potential victims of FGM may establish eligibility for asylum and withholding of deportation.
- ◆ **Disability and Naturalization.** On March 19, 1997, the INS published a final rule that implements Congressionally mandated exceptions from the English and Civics requirements for naturalizations for persons with disabilities that prevent them.

Agricultural Workers. The Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division has certain responsibilities under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 to enforce the labor standards protections for temporary non-immigrant agricultural workers admitted to the United States, and to inspect for compliance with the record keeping requirements of the employer sanctions provisions of the statute. In addition, Wage and Hour has responsibility for ensuring that promised labor standards/conditions are met with respect to non-immigrant aliens that participate in certain programs. Those that most directly affect women include the H-1A visa foreign nurse program under the Immigration Nursing Relief Act of 1989, and the H-1B visa professional employee and F-1 visa student programs under the Immigration Act of 1990.

INVOLUNTARY SERVITUDE AND SLAVERY

The Criminal Section of the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice prosecutes criminal violations of civil rights statutes including involuntary servitude and slavery. Many of these prosecutions involve women victims.

For example, in *U.S. v Talal and Abair Alzanki* the defendants, a Kuwaiti couple living in Quincy, Massachusetts, held a Sri Lankan woman who flew to Boston from Kuwait to be their domestic servant in involuntary servitude from August to December 1992. Defendant Talal Alzanki was convicted at trial.

Also, in *U.S. v Vargas, et al.* the defendants, a mother, son, and daughter who are Mexican nationals were convicted of involuntary servitude and harboring an illegal alien after smuggling a young woman into the U.S. from Mexico City under the false promise of employment as a maid in their home. Beginning in late winter 1990 until January 1991, the victim was forced to work without payment, often beaten for unsatisfactory performance as a maid, and threatened that she would be arrested and beaten as an illegal alien if she attempted to leave. She was eventually forced to live for several months in a locked garage, beaten daily, and allowed in the home only to clean the house and occasionally use the toilet at night.

[See also the work of the Department of Justice under F.5.]

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION PROVISIONS OF THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT

The Department of Justice Office of Special Counsel for Immigration-related Unfair Employment Practices enforces the Immigration and Nationality Act's antidiscrimination provision. The Act makes it illegal for employers of four or more employees to discriminate on the basis of national origin and/or citizenship status in hiring, firing, and recruiting or referring for a fee. The Act also prohibits document abuse, i.e., requesting more or different documents than necessary for verifying the identity and work eligibility of new hires. In addition, the Act prohibits retaliation against individuals who file charges and participate in investigations and hearings about unfair immigration-related employment practices. While the Act does not specifically target women, many of the beneficiaries of this Act are women.

While charges filed with the Office of Special Counsel are not gender-specific, of 4,501 charges filed from 1987 through the first quarter of 1996, nearly half were filed by women. The Office of Special Counsel has recovered \$3,397,335 in back pay from 1987 through the first quarter of 1996, approximately half of which was for women who have been victims of national origin discrimination, citizenship status discrimination, or document abuse. Some of these cases also included reinstatements as a relief. For example, under the terms of a 1995 settlement, a nationwide janitorial service agreed to pay civil penalties, to stop its practice of document abuse, and to provide training on the antidiscrimination provision to its employees nationwide; this will affect potentially thousands of female janitorial workers.

HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTING AND POLICIES

Country Reports. The Department of State chronicles, documents and integrates women's human rights into its annual country reports on human rights. The 1996 human rights report contains the most comprehensive reporting on violations of women's human rights to date.

Monthly progress reports. The State Department publishes a monthly report on the progress countries are making to follow-up to the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference on Women.

Advocacy. The Department of State advocates international women's human rights in multilateral forums, especially in the United Nations. In 1996, it took the lead in protesting restrictions on women and girls in Afghanistan by the Taliban during the General Assembly session.

Grassroots support. Many U.S. embassies use discretionary democracy and human rights funds to support grassroots efforts for the advancement of women. For example, the U.S. Embassy in Namibia devoted much of its 1996 democracy and human rights funds to programs aimed at eradicating sexual and domestic violence.

Foreign Policy. The United States government has affirmed its commitment to pursuing issues of women's rights as a mainstream element of foreign policy.

President Clinton reaffirmed this commitment on International Human Rights Day, December 10, 1996, during a ceremony honoring six women human rights activists.

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton promotes women's human rights worldwide. On several international trips she has met with women leaders and women's non-governmental organizations to discuss the status of women and illustrate the priority of these issues.

On March 12, 1997, Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, in an address to government officials and representatives of non-governmental organizations, affirmed that advancing the status of women is an important element of U. S. foreign policy which complements the broader strategic, diplomatic, and economic interests of the United States.

State Department officials, in public statements regarding restrictions against and treatment of women in Taliban-controlled areas of Afghanistan have linked women's human rights to a fundamental expression of foreign policy.

REQUESTS FOR EXECUTIVE CLEMENCY

Occasionally, female petitioners for executive clemency premise requests for pardon or sentence commutation in whole or in part upon claims of abuse or overbearing by male partners. Such factors are then considered in the totality of the circumstances analysis that is applied in formulating Department of Justice recommendations for presidential action.

DEFENSE INCIDENT BASED REPORTING SYSTEM

- ❖ DoD will implement early next year the Defense Incident Based Reporting System (DIBRS). This comprehensive reporting system will include reporting requirements on the sex of victims, and whether offenses are "bias-motivated."

I.2. Ensure equality and non-discrimination under the law and in practice.

[See A.1 and 2; B.1., 3 and 4; D.1 and 3; F.1, 2, 3, and 5; G.1.]

Non-discrimination in derivative citizenship. In the Immigration and Technical Corrections Act of 1994 (INTCA), Congress amended the law to treat those born abroad before noon (EST) May 24, 1934, equitably with respect to derivative citizenship, regardless of which parent was a U.S. citizen. INS is in the process of promulgating an interim rule to implement this provision of INTCA. INS will publish its interim rule and review the comments it receives.

- ❖ **Gender bias in language.** The Department of Agriculture will evaluate gender bias in language and images in USDA publications, and develop a plan for incorporating a gender-neutral approach to text editing and image selection.

I.3. Achieve legal literacy.

WORKING WOMEN'S RIGHTS

- ◆ **“Don’t Work in the Dark!” Campaign.** The Department of Labor Women’s Bureau introduced its newest public education campaign, “Don’t Work in the Dark!” Since broadened, it:
 - encourages women to get the facts about women in the labor force;
 - helps women to understand their rights on the job;
 - increases women’s access to information and what works from employers, unions, and organizations nationwide who are making positive changes in their workplaces.
- ◆ In September 1996, under the auspices of the “Don’t Work in the Dark!” campaign, the Women’s Bureau launched its first Regional Working Women’s Summits. More than 4,000 women in 20 cities participated in substantive and solution-oriented discussions of child and elder care, the glass ceiling, fair pay, pensions, lifelong learning, downsizing, domestic violence, and workplace flexibility.
- ❖ As a followup to the regional summits, the Women’s Bureau will be hosting a National Working Women’s Summit on June 5, 1997. The summit, entitled “Economic Equity: Realities, Responsibilities, and Rewards” will broadcast live from Washington, D.C., downlinking to thousands of women at sites nationwide. Following the broadcast, many locations will continue dialogue discussing strategies to enhance women’s ability to seek and retain employment and advance in the job market, sharing ideas with policy makers at the federal, state, and local levels. The Bureau will also provide a toll-free number for participants to call for post-event questions or suggestions.

Outreach. To help prepare women for the future of work in the 21st Century, the Women's Bureau has developed a "Don't Work in the Dark!" kit which provides the following information and resources:

"KNOW THE FACTS"

Two fact sheets from the Fair Pay Clearinghouse, "Worth More Than We Earn: Fair Pay for Working Women," and "What Works: Fair Pay for Working Women;"

- 20 Facts on Women Workers;
- What Women Need to Know About Downsizing;
- Domestic Violence: A Workplace Issue;
- Black Women in the Labor Force;
- Women of Hispanic Origin in the Labor Force;
- Women in Management;
- Women Veterans;
- Where the Jobs Are for Women;
- Working Women's Pension Checklist and brochure.

"KNOW YOUR RIGHTS"

- Sexual Harassment;
- Family and Medical Leave;
- Pregnancy Discrimination;
- Wage Discrimination;
- Age Discrimination;
- Disability Discrimination.

"KNOW WHAT WORKS"

- What Works! The Final Honor Roll Report;
- Downsized, Rightsized and Outsourced: Meeting the Challenges of Corporate Restructuring.

(Copies of the above publications can be obtained by calling 1-800-827-5335.)

❖ **Internet.** The Women's Bureau's home page on the Internet includes the Don't Work in the Dark series of pamphlets, the updated and new fact sheets, information on how businesses and other community resources may participate in the Fair Pay Clearinghouse: (<http://www.dol.gov/dol/wb>).

- ❖ The Women's Bureau will soon provide an interactive chat box for Web site visitors.

VICTIM/WITNESS ASSISTANCE

- ◆ The Defense Department has initiated a comprehensive victim/witness assistance program that ensures that all victims are advised of their rights and understand resources available to assist them at each stage of the entire criminal justice process. The governing Directive and Instruction directs that particular attention be paid to victims of serious, violent crime including child abuse, domestic violence, and sexual misconduct. Several DoD-wide training sessions have been held in cooperation with vigorous implementation of this program.

GLOBAL INITIATIVE

- ◆ **Women's Legal Rights Initiative.** USAID's Women's Legal Rights Initiative will help women develop an understanding of the legal system and empower women to understand how law inhibits or promotes their participation in social and economic life. Addressing the legislative, judiciary, and community levels of the legal structure, the Initiative will strengthen women's legal literacy; integrate gender issues into law school curricula; provide or support legal clinics; and engage in direct policy dialogue with legislators to promote more equitable laws and policies. USAID will work through local NGOs to address all levels of the legal structure through research and advocacy programs. The program focuses on Asia, the Newly Independent States, and Eastern Europe, but will extend to Africa in the next two years.
- ❖ **Latin America.** In Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, and Peru, USAID will collaborate with women's legal rights groups throughout Latin America, and strengthen the legal status of women by supporting the work of legal advocates and academics who write and teach from a gender perspective. The project will support efforts to create a legal doctrine that embodies an understanding of gender, develop new curricula and teaching methods in law schools, and strengthen connections with the advocacy community to more effectively address gender violence and other forms of gender discrimination.

J. Women and the Media



Platform for Action Strategic Objectives:

- J.1. Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision making in and through the media and new technologies of communication.
- J.2. Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.

J.1. Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision making in and through the media and new technologies of communication.

BROADCAST INDUSTRY OWNERSHIP

Minority Telecommunications Development Program. The Department of Commerce/National Telecommunications and Information Administration promotes minority ownership in the broadcast industry including ownership by women through the Minority Telecommunications Development Program (MTDP). The MTDP developed the ComTrain (communications training) Web site where interested persons can access information on how to start a business, get government approval and find financing for purchasing and running a radio or TV station.

The Public Broadcasting Facilities Program. The Department of Commerce/National Telecommunications and Information Administration's program includes a specific requirement for the participation of women. This is a grant program which has as one of its goals increasing

the public broadcasting services and facilities available to, operated by and owned by minorities and women.

Market Entry Barriers. In May 1996, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Adopted a Notice of Inquiry implementing its mandate under section 257 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to identify and eliminate market entry barriers for small businesses in the communications industry, including unique barriers faced by small businesses owned by women or minorities. Women owned and controlled 1.9% (27) of the 1,342 commercial television stations and 3.8% (394) of the 10,244 commercial radio stations in the United States according to the 1987 U.S. Census. The Market Entry Barriers proceeding will provide the FCC with evidence it can use to identify and take steps to eliminate market barriers affecting small businesses, including those small businesses owned by women or minorities in the communications industry.

WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS LICENSES

Auction Process. In 1993 the U.S. Congress gave the FCC authority to use auctions to grant licenses for wireless subscription-based communications services. Congress mandated that through the auction process, the FCC “ensure that small businesses, rural telephone companies and businesses owned by members of minority groups and women are given the opportunity to participate in the provisions of spectrum-based service.”

The FCC provided bidding credits and installment payments to allow small businesses, including those owned by women or minorities, to pay for their licenses over time and to help them attract capital to support their businesses.

The FCC has successfully increased opportunities for women business ownership in wireless communications through the auction process. Women acquired 5.8% or 213 of the 3,651 licenses granted through simultaneous-multiple-round auctions. The FCC’s Office of Communications Business Opportunities (OCBO) is the central resource for information on women business ownership in the communications industry, conducting extensive outreach to women’s organizations, providing information on FCC proceedings affecting women, and working with the FCC Chairman and Commissioners to create licensing rules conducive to women business participation.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND

- ◆ The TDF was authorized on February 8, 1996 by the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to provide a source of loans and equity investment capital to small communications businesses. The TDF Board of Directors is currently studying gaps in the capital markets, including those affecting women-owned businesses, to determine its market focus, and structure, and to develop an application and review process. The TDF currently has \$18.1 million to fund loans, equity investments and assistance, and will earn additional capital through the interest on upfront payments businesses submit to

participate in the FCC's spectrum auctions. The FCC's Office of Communications Business Opportunities (202) 418-0990 and Office of General Counsel (202) 418-1700 are assisting the TDF Board of Directors by fielding public inquiries on the Fund.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The FCC has equal employment opportunity (EEO) requirements. These rules serve two objectives: (1) to promote programming that reflects the interests of minorities and women in the local community, as well as those of the community at large, and (2) to deter discriminatory employment practices. In general, the FCC requires broadcast licensees to establish and maintain a program to provide equal employment opportunities for women and minorities in all aspects of their employment policies and practices. Broadcast stations are required to make efforts to recruit women and minorities for vacancies, to track their efforts, and file a report with the FCC on the composition of their staff. Stations with fewer than five employees are exempt from the reporting requirements. As of 1994, 13,230 broadcast stations were subject to the FCC's EEO rules. The 8,991 stations filing EEO reports with the FCC employed 145,645 people, 58,099 (39.9%) of which were women and 26,796 (18.4%) of which are minorities. In February 1996, the FCC issued an Order and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking seeking ways to ensure an effective EEO enforcement program, while reducing undue administrative burdens on station licensees.

INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH

Prior to the UN Fourth World Conference on Women, USIA produced *Finding Your Public Voice: A Media Guidebook for Women* to help people better utilize the media as a conduit for their organizational and individual public voices. It was disseminated at the Beijing conference and since, internationally, through its missions, by requests and at events.

The Guidebook is one of many resources USIA has made available on its worldwide electronic bulletin board on the Internet. The home page — <http://women.usia.gov/usia/> — focuses on follow-up activities to the UN Women's Conference.

J.2. Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.

The Advisory Council on Violence Against Women. The Council was created in 1995, and is co-chaired by Attorney General Janet Reno and Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala. It consists of 46 experts from law enforcement, media, health and social services, victim advocacy and survivors working together to prevent violence against women.

INTERNATIONAL

Documentaries and TV features. USIA produced a series of documentaries highlighting leaders of the American women's rights movement, women in business, women in politics, and women's health issues for distribution around the world. WorldNet has prepared a series of features on issues discussed at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women.

Interactive Dialogues Programs. USIA use satellites to connect U.S. based speakers with interested parties around the world. Recent programs have included such topics as women in politics/women electing women, women in media, women in business, women in the Civil Rights Movement, female genital mutilation, AIDS and women, and women in education.

Videos. USIA's WorldNet produced a video of the two-hour national conference via satellite *America's Commitment: The UN Women's Conference One Year Later*. This conference, sponsored by the President's Interagency Council on Women, featured First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, senior women in government and leaders in women's rights. WorldNet is making it available to USIA missions.

K. Women and the Environment



Platform for Action Strategic Objectives:

- K.1. Involve women actively in environmental decision making at all levels.
- K.2. Integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programs for sustainable development.
- K.3. Strengthen or establish mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women.

K.1. Involve women actively in environmental decision making at all levels.

Access to information is a prerequisite for sound decision making. Increasing access to environmental information and involving women and local communities in environmental decisions results in better solutions to improve public health and the environment. EPA has a commitment to community right-to-know initiatives about local pollution, public access to information and community participation. These initiatives enable women to directly participate in decisions that affect the health of the environment and of their families. Moreover, women have a role to play as equal partners in policy formation and decision making in management of natural resources and the environment and in all fields of scientific endeavor. Education in environmental science and policy empowers women to be effective environmental stewards and to succeed in professional careers. To this end, the U.S. is providing women with opportunities for education, employment, and advancement in scientific careers.

RIGHT-TO-KNOW

Environmental toxins. EPA's Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) assures every woman and man the right-to-know about what dangerous chemicals are being released into the environment in every community in the United States. In 1994, out of 286 new chemicals added to the TRI, 78 were added, at least in part, because of their potential reproductive and developmental effects. People have easy access to this information through local libraries, state and federal environmental offices, online electronic networks, and EPA's toll-free hotline. In addition, EPA enforcement databases are now being made available to communities so that they can help identify potential violations of existing regulations and permits within their communities.

CURRENT AND FUTURE EPA INITIATIVES

- ❖ **Chemical Releases Information.** Increase and facilitate women's right-to-know about chemical releases in their communities with potential to cause reproductive and developmental effects. Increase outreach to women on use of the TRI.
- ❖ **Residential Risk Information.** Provide women with more information on environmental hazards around the home, office and community. Target materials on residential exposure to potentially hazardous environmental agents, including lead, pesticides, radon, asbestos, tobacco smoke, and contaminants in drinking water to women.
- ❖ **Consumer Labeling.** Make safety information on labels for household cleaning products, pesticides, and antimicrobial products more understandable.
- ❖ **Reproductive and developmental risks information.** Target materials on reproductive and developmental risks for distribution to gynecologists, obstetricians, and women's health networks.

FUTURE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION (NOAA) INITIATIVES

- ❖ Launch a new multi-media public awareness project involving videos, brochures, and newspaper and/or magazine articles on three topics that directly affect women's health: (1) The health effects of traditional fish smoking practices on Native American women, and possible alternatives to diminish hazardous effects; (2) Natural disaster awareness for primary care givers; (3) Hazardous materials (HAZMAT) and coastal hazards response. Distribution will be through organizations representing primary care givers, parents, and educational institutions.

EDUCATION AND STEWARDSHIP

- ◆ **Environmental Education Training.** Through a cooperative agreement, EPA is working to implement a national environmental education training program for educators such as K-12 teachers, nonformal educators, and state and local education

officials. Many of those expected to benefit are K-12 teachers, of which women constitute a substantial percentage.

- ❖ **Center for Environmental Information and Statistics.** EPA has announced a new program to draw together the Agency's statistical information resources called the Center for Environmental Information and Statistics. By improving the ease of public access to EPA's information services, women will be better able to make informed decisions about the environment that affect their reproductive and daily health as well as that of their families.

- ❖ **Science Literacy.** The Department of the Interior's new science literacy project — "Investing in the Nation's Environmental Future" — will foster the development of future scientists and resource managers as well as environmentally conscious citizens.

As stewards of our nation's natural and cultural resources, the DOI is already active in developing education materials, teaching classes, and volunteering to work with students. Given the critical environmental restoration initiatives now underway and the excellence of the DOI's scientists, tremendous opportunities exist to engage young people in the DOI's work.

The science literacy pilot project is directed at primary and secondary school students, with an equal representation of girls and boys. The objective of the project is to attach an educational component to several existing DOI initiatives, such as the Appalachian Clean Streams Initiative. The specifics of each component will be determined by local program managers in consultation with local schools and/or community organizations.

The project will include hands-on activities and provide students a better understanding of the practical importance of science in managing natural resources and protecting the environment; increase environmental awareness and interest in science-related careers; advance science literacy; and encourage young Americans to high levels of attainment in math and science.

- ❖ **Restoring community natural resources.** The Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Commencement 2000 is a program designed to bring about long-term change in the relationship between the USDA Forest Service and the public. The program targets young people of color, young women, and immigrants in the more disadvantaged urban school systems. Working in partnerships with inner city communities and their schools, Commencement 2000 projects restore community natural resources and develop community gardens, open spaces, and parks. Current program sites are located in California and Colorado, with plans to expand to New York. USDA also provides funding to a similar program, Urban Resources Partnership, that supports city and community environmental protection and restoration activities.
- ❖ **Environmental resources camps.** USDA is taking steps to ensure that participants at future environmental and natural resource summer camps at Forest Service field offices include representative numbers of female students and counselors.

ENVIRONMENTAL JOB TRAINING IN LOW INCOME COMMUNITIES

EPA is working with 78 cities to assess and develop plans to clean up and reuse brownfields, i.e. abandoned properties that lie idle in urban neighborhoods. In these communities, EPA, in partnership with local job training organizations, labor unions, community colleges and four-year universities have established partnerships to develop long-term plans to foster workforce development through environmental job training, outreach, and education to local residents.

Ongoing activities include EPA's working with:

- Rio Hondo College in Whittier, CA to provide environmental job training and educational opportunities to Hispanic and other minority female heads of household.
- The Hazardous Materials Training and Research Institute to conduct workshops for community colleges located near brownfield pilot sites on how to implement successful workforce development programs that include getting jobs in environmental fields.
- Morgan State University in Baltimore, MD plans to hold the Fifth Summer Institute for Teachers in July 1997. Forty teachers from public schools located near brownfields or hazardous waste sites will attend. Over 70 percent of the teachers will be women.

CAREERS

EPA supports Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) and other programs that seek to encourage women to establish careers in engineering, the environmental sciences, and management.

FUTURE EPA INITIATIVES:

- ❖ **Mentoring Program.** Initiate a pilot science and engineering mentoring program to maximize the potential of women in science and engineering in the federal government. This program will help ensure a pool of federally employed women in science and engineering who can meet the science, technology and public policy needs of the 21st century.
- ❖ **Greater Leadership Opportunities (GLO) Program.** Reinstate GLO, which was discontinued in 1996 for budgetary reasons, in which minority and women employees are provided with training and rotational assignments to enhance their supervisory skills and promote professional growth.

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

USAID is involving women from many sectors of society in its environmental programs around the world, with activities including skills and leadership training, participation in meetings and conferences, education and communication efforts, and women's networks and

organizations. Even greater efforts will be directed at including diverse groups of women into USAID's own program planning, implementation and monitoring.

- ❖ **Women's Legal Rights Initiative.** In addressing legal rights, USAID will include the role of legal rights, especially property rights and inheritance laws, in promoting women's land tenure and ownership of housing — all of which are key in supporting women's roles in management of the environment, including sustainable agriculture.

K.2. Integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programs for sustainable development.

The President's Council on Sustainable Development report, *Sustainable America: A New Consensus for Prosperity, Opportunity, and a Healthy Environment for the Future*, was a call to consider economic, environmental, and social equity issues as inextricably linked. The report expressed the core belief that to achieve sustainability jobs, productivity, wages, capital and savings, profits and education must grow, while pollution, waste, and poverty must be reduced.

EPA's programs, especially those dealing with low-income neighborhoods and communities of color, have a direct effect on the health and economic prosperity of women whether they live and work in urban or rural communities. Statistics show that women represent a disproportionate number of the poor, and that female-headed households are the poorest households.

EPA's remains committed to ensuring environmental justice, implementing the Community Empowerment Initiative, and cleaning up and returning brownfields, abandoned urban properties, back to productive use. It also is working to foster healthy communities free of environmental health hazards, create jobs and reduce poverty, all of which are a part of creating sustainable, livable communities for women and families.

URBAN BROWNFIELDS

In partnership with states, communities, and the private sector, EPA is working to prevent, clean up safely, and reuse in sustainable ways brownfields, or abandoned properties that lie idle in urban neighborhoods. Seventy-eight brownfield pilot projects across the country are now restoring these properties to new uses, thereby creating jobs, stimulating economic growth, increasing property values, and generating tax revenues and protecting the environment.

EPA is also supporting a tax incentive for developers who clean up and redevelop brownfield properties. The tax incentive is expected to spur some \$10 billion in private cleanups and return to productive use as many as 30,000 brownfield sites.

- ❖ Participation of community residents, many of whom are female heads of households, is an integral part of redeveloping the sites and creating jobs.

RURAL AREAS

- ❖ EPA is providing funding to train residents of low-income communities located next to important natural resources in strategic approaches to creating jobs while protecting and restoring the local environment. This approach involves expanding existing small businesses and creating new ones based on the communities' inherent cultural and natural resources, instead of recruiting industry from elsewhere to locate there. The projects are expected to benefit women, who have experienced proportionally greater opportunities in small business.

SMART GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

“Smart Growth.” Sprawl has many adverse effects on the environment, including increased contaminated runoff and air pollution, but it has a unique and pervasive impact on women and families. Women tend to be the primary caregivers and transportation providers and are a disproportionately large percentage of the poor. Society's abandonment of urban centers hurts women more than the population at large. Working with local governments, non-governmental organizations, community leaders, and the private sector, EPA is promoting “Smart Growth,” a program to slow the spread of sprawl and encourage responsible development.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE GRANTS

- ❖ EPA will award grants to encourage community-based projects to promote environmental protection and foster economic prosperity.

INTERNATIONAL

Environmental awareness campaigns. In the international arena, USDA provides technical assistance to the U.S. Agency for International Development Global Bureau's Environment Center in environmental education and communication. All project design and implementation phases include consideration of gender, particularly in operations research activity. In the development of environmental awareness campaigns, school curriculum development, and community mobilization activities, special attention is given to the role of women and the potential impacts on women. In Egypt, for example, applied research showed that women were primarily responsible for solid waste management, indicating that the design of a collection system should reflect their needs and concerns.

K.3. Strengthen or establish mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women.

POLICY, RESEARCH, TESTING, AND ASSESSMENT

The Federal Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Environment and Women's Health. Established by the Public Health Service's Office of Women's Health in 1994, the Committee, with representation from HHS agencies, EPA and the Department of Defense, shares information, develops joint initiatives, and mobilizes multiple agencies to address women's health and the environment. It focuses on how environmental factors at home and work, such as pollutants and exogenous hormones, and other environmental factors may contribute to the risk for diseases in women.

Inventory on women's health and the environment. The Coordinating Committee has developed an inventory of federal activities that address women's health and the environment. The committee will develop strategies to protect women from environmental hazards.

Testing human samples for environmental toxicants. The CDC's National Center for Environmental Health laboratory has developed the capacity to measure 150 different toxicants in human blood, tissue or urine. This testing can differentiate exposures that truly cause disease from those that truly do not, saving money and preventing needless anxiety and alarm.

Research and testing on endocrine disrupters. Endocrine factors regulate the normal functions of all organ systems and small disturbances in endocrine function — especially during certain stages of the life style such as development, pregnancy and lactation — can lead to profound and lasting effects. EPA's research agenda in this area is focused on the most critical gaps in our knowledge base to promote more informed decisions on public health, ecosystem effects and related management options. The Agency has begun work on developing a screening and testing strategy for chemicals that may disrupt endocrine systems. Under the new Food Quality Protection Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996, the Agency must complete this strategy by August 1998, and begin to implement a program to carry out the screening and testing by August 1999.

FUTURE EPA INITIATIVES

- ❖ **Gender Impact and Integrated Risk Assessment.** All EPA offices will be provided with guidance that requires that all major Agency risk assessments take into account cumulative risks and integrate understanding — available at the time of the assessment — of the broadest range of risks in their assessments. The Agency has committed to investigate unique impacts attributable to gender, ethnicity, geographic origins or age of the affected populations to determine more precisely whether environmental threats pose a greater risk to women, children, the elderly and other specific populations. Of particular importance are the right-to-know aspects of this new guidance, which require

that EPA build opportunities for citizens and stakeholders to understand its ongoing risk assessments and to provide comments at every stage of the process.

- ❖ **Research and recommendations.** Initiate an in-depth study to develop recommendations for incorporating gender differences into decisions about environmental public health risks. Take action, if appropriate, in the regulatory process to ensure adequate protection to women throughout the life cycle.
- ❖ **Workshop.** EPA commissioned a grantee to review gender differences in susceptibility and exposure to environmental pollutants. In part as a result of this work, EPA is cosponsoring an Institute of Medicine workshop on gender differences in susceptibility and exposure to environmental factors with the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

One in eight women in America is diagnosed with breast cancer every year. Five million American women suffer from endometriosis. Some scientists attribute increases in these diseases to toxic chemicals — such as dioxin, PCBs, and pesticides — in air, water, and food. Toxic chemicals may also have a disproportionate effect on the health of women and fetuses when compared to the general population.

EPA recognizes the fundamental connection between hazards in the environment and potential risks to human health. Women are affected by environmental conditions differently from men, due to different day-to-day circumstances and biological make-up. Physiological factors such as hormones, the menstrual cycle, pregnancy, and menopause are just a few of the characteristics that affect women's susceptibility to environmental pollutants. Occupation, nutrition, and socioeconomic status also play a part in women's susceptibility to pollution. Studies have more often focused on adult white males. In addition, risk to a pregnant woman is also a risk to her fetus.

The National Action Plan on Breast Cancer. Initiated in 1993 by HHS, the Plan is aggressively addressing potential breast cancer causes, including environmental chemicals.

Research on Environmental Hormones and Environmental Risk. Research has been expanded and testing strategies have been developed for environmental estrogens and other endocrine disruptors. Additional research is focusing on the effects of lead exposure on adolescent development and environmental chemicals on endometriosis, reproduction and development affects, and other health conditions.

Pesticides. Some studies have linked women's exposure to pesticides to breast cancer, ovarian cancer, and reproductive and developmental effects. In 1993, the U.S. Government announced a new policy to reduce the use of high-risk pesticides significantly. EPA has canceled uses of some pesticides that posed an unreasonable risk to public health while moving safer substitutes onto the market more quickly.

Safe Food. The Food Quality Protection Act will provide a comprehensive overhaul to strengthen the nation's food safety system that regulates pesticides on foods. This law calls for expanding testing and review of chemicals that may pose breast cancer, reproductive and developmental, and other risks to women. It replaces a fragmented system with a single, more protective, comprehensive health-based standard for all foods, includes provisions that specifically protect children from pesticide risks, and provides consumers with information about the pesticides in their food.

Safe Drinking Water. New provisions to the Safe Drinking Water Law strengthen protection to ensure that drinking water is clean and safe. This law calls for considering special populations such as pregnant women, children, the elderly, and people with HIV/AIDS to ensure stronger health protection. It also creates appropriate standards for individuals with compromised immune systems for contaminants like crypto-sporidium. It makes more information public than ever before, providing access to direct, simple information sent directly to the homes in water utility bills. In addition, the law calls for stronger preventative action by assessing pollution threats to local sources of water.

Clean Air Standards. As many as 54 of the 189 toxic air pollutants are associated with reproductive and developmental effects. EPA's tougher clean air standards are intended to help prevent these effects in women by reducing toxic pollution. In the past five years, EPA has put in place standards which will result annually in removing 2 billion pounds of dangerous air toxics from the air. EPA has set tougher new standards for burning municipal waste — one of the largest sources of dioxin which accumulates in human tissue and breast milk and is associated with developmental and reproductive effects.

Reduction of Toxic Pollutants. EPA has worked to substantially reduce sources of PCBs, mercury, and other toxins that continue to persist in the environment. These pollutants can pose harm to the female reproductive system and children's development and immune systems. The Agency has significantly reduced these pollutants and has initiated a program with Canada and Mexico to improve management of PCBs, mercury, DDT, and chlordane. Because some of these toxins often accumulate in fish, EPA has issued guidance to limit the consumption of fish by women of child-bearing age.

- ❖ In the future, EPA will refine water quality criteria to increase protection of the fetus and women who consume fish caught for subsistence or for sport. These women have a higher consumption of fish and therefore may have higher exposure to pollutants that bioaccumulate in fish.
- ❖ **Great Lakes toxins.** EPA has signed an agreement with Canada to virtually eliminate persistent toxic substances from the Great Lakes by the year 2006. This step will further help to increase protection of the fetus and women who consume fish caught for subsistence or sport.

Lead poisoning. Lead poisoning is the #1 environmental health hazard for children and can cause IQ deficits, hyperactivity, and other problems. In women, lead poisoning can result in

high blood pressure, cause injury to the fetus, and increase the risk of miscarriage. The U.S. Government has greatly expanded efforts to eliminate lead paint hazards in the nation's housing. EPA has written regulations to train people in risk assessment and abatement skills, to establish state programs, and to ensure that home buyers and renters have the right-to-know about potential health risks from lead paint in homes before they buy or rent. The Agency has issued guidance on identifying hazardous levels of lead paint, soil, and dust, and on remodeling homes containing lead-based paint. It also continues to research more cost effective ways to reduce health hazards from lead paint.

- ❖ **Right-to-know.** EPA also is launching a new right-to-know program that will require that potential buyers and renters be informed about lead in the home and is initiating an aggressive lead abatement training program. To reduce lead in the environment further, the U.S. Government is working to promote a complete phase-out of leaded gasoline throughout the world.

Environmental Justice Developmental Centers. The National Institute of Environmental Health Services (NIEHS), part of HHS/NIH, has established a number of Environmental Justice Developmental Centers to foster and support community outreach/involvement in environmental health studies. In addition, research in areas such as endocrine disruptors, the health effects of agricultural chemicals on farm families, and the link between pesticide exposure and breast cancer are underway.

PROTECTING CHILDREN

National Agenda to Protect Children. Recognizing that children are at an increased risk from many environmental hazards, compared to adults, EPA has established the National Agenda to Protect Children from environmental threats. Its agency-wide policy stipulates that all programs will consistently and explicitly take into account health risks to children and infants from environmental hazards when assessing risk. Further, the Agency is acting to address hazards from a range of sources — from asthma-inducing air pollution and lead-based paint in older homes to microbes in drinking water and persistent industrial chemicals that may cause cancer or induce reproductive or developmental changes.

- ◆ EPA issued a report on children's environmental health in September 1996 which established a national agenda to protect children's health from environmental threats. The agenda calls on national, state and local policy makers — as well as each community and family — to learn about the environmental threats children face, participate in an informed national policy debate, and take appropriate action.
- ❖ EPA has created a new Office of Children's Health Protection to address the wide array of complex environmental threats to children's health, from asthma-exacerbating air pollution to toxic chemicals that can lead to serious health problems. The office will review and set child protective environmental standards, research and set policies on children's unique susceptibility and exposure to pollutants, and expand community right-to-know and education on children's health.

L. The Girl-Child



Platform for Action Strategic Objectives:

- L.1. Eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl-child.
- L.2. Eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls.
- L.3. Promote and protect the rights of the girl-child and increase awareness of her needs and potential.
- L.4. Eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development, and training.
- L.5. Eliminate discrimination against girls in health and nutrition.
- L.6. Eliminate the economic exploitation of child labor and protect young girls at work.
- L.7. Eradicate violence against the girl-child.
- L.8. Promote the girl-child's awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life.
- L.9. Strengthen the role of the family in improving the status of the girl-child.

L.1. Eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl-child.

L.2. Eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls.

[See discussion under D.1., and I.1.]

L.3. Promote and protect the rights of the girl-child and increase awareness of her needs and potential.

EDUCATION CAMPAIGNS

- ◆ **Girl Power!** Girl Power! is a multiphase, national public education campaign sponsored by the Department of Health and Human Services to help encourage and empower 9- to 14-year-old girls to make the most of their lives. Studies show that girls tend to lose self-confidence and self-worth during this pivotal stage, becoming less physically active, performing less well in school, and neglecting their own interests and aspirations. It is during these years that girls become more vulnerable to negative outside influences and mixed messages about risky behaviors.

First phase. During its first phase, Girl Power! will combine strong “no-use” messages about tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs with an emphasis on providing opportunities for girls to build skills and self-confidence in academics, arts, sports, and other endeavors. Subsequent phases will address related issues such as premature sexual activity, physical activity, nutrition, and mental health.

Campaign Materials. To provide positive messages, accurate health information, and support for girls and those who care about them, Girl Power! campaign products include a diary for girls containing writings and drawings by girls ages 9 through 14. Also available is a Girl Power! Hometown Press Kit with sample media pieces, fact sheets, and radio and print public service announcements easily adaptable for local use. Other campaign materials include:

- “The More You Know” TV PSAs with Julianna Margulies, star of NBC’s “ER.”
- Print PSAs and poster featuring Dominique Dawes, 1996 Olympic gold medalist in gymnastics.
- Poster displays “Have You Got It? Girl Power! We’ve Got the Power to be Drug Free!” in 500 shopping malls via 3-M Media.
- Girl Power! Web site on the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information home page at <http://www.health.org>
- Girl Power! bookmarks, baseball caps, and other products.

Improving upon Previous Government Efforts. Three aspects of the Girl Power! campaign set it apart from past federal government efforts:

- The Girl Power! campaign recognizes that while some messages work equally well for boys and girls, girls also need to hear health messages targeted to their unique needs, interests, and challenges.
- The Girl Power! campaign takes a comprehensive approach, addressing not only a range of health issues but also the erosion of self-confidence, motivation, and opportunity that is too typical for many girls 9 through 14 years of age.

- The Girl Power! campaign is based on research indicating that girls at 8 or 9 typically have very strong attitudes about their health. According to the Partnership for a Drug-Free America's 1995 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study, for example, the overwhelming majority of girls and boys in grades 4 through 6 believe that "using drugs is dangerous." Younger girls also tend to be more physically active than older girls. This campaign works to reinforce and sustain these positive values among girls 9-14.

PROVIDING POSITIVE ALTERNATIVES TO CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR

A Department of Justice goal is to support a focus on prevention of gang-related violence perpetrated by girls and young women. DOJ's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has funded 93 mentoring programs that provide youth who are at-risk of dropping out of school or getting in trouble with a one-on-one relationship with a caring adult over 21. These adults will provide discipline, guidance, and personal attention through activities such as tutoring, job training, and community service on a regular basis over an extended period of time. Four of these programs are targeted to female-only youth, while the remaining 89 include both male and female young people. The four female-only programs have many of the same components of the remaining 89, but have a greater emphasis on female issues and concerns.

- ◆ **Mentoring for Pre-Adolescent Girls.** Big Sisters of Colorado, Inc. provides comprehensive, preventive mentoring to 10- to 12-year old girls who are attending schools in high crime areas and have been identified as at risk for participation in gangs. The mentoring involves three to four hours of contact per week between Big Sisters and Little Sisters. This is augmented by a 15-week group education program (Life Choices) targeting decision-making skills and weekly sessions on the critical issues facing girls today, including sexuality, academic performance, gangs, drugs, and alcohol.
- ◆ **Young People United, Making Progress.** Big Sisters of Philadelphia, Inc. provides mentors for the development of one-on-one long-term relationships with Latina school girls ages 10 through 18. The program includes individual and family counseling, crisis intervention, advocacy, referrals, and case management. The girls are also involved in life skills workshops and group and community service activities. This program is funded through June 1998.
- **Comprehensive Community-Wide Approach to Gang Prevention, Intervention, and Suppression.** At least three of five demonstration sites will sponsor a combination of research into and action upon the issue of the female's role in street gang violence. One concern is to what extent females are directly involved in street gang violence versus acting as a catalyst or motivator in predominantly male violence. Based on the findings, sites will develop an appropriate intervention strategy. Two sites have begun preparing for this by acquiring female street gang outreach workers. This program was awarded in May 1995 and will be funded through FY 1998.

- ◆ **The Safe Futures Program.** Awarded in September 1995, this five-year program funds approximately \$1.4 million per year to six sites: Boston, Massachusetts; Seattle, Washington; St. Louis, Missouri; and Contra Costa County, California; Imperial County, California (rural) and Fort Belknap Indian Community, Harlem, Montana (tribal government). Several programmatic components allow the sites to address many delinquency issues; among these is a component specifically for female offenders and related risk factors of delinquency, such as teen pregnancy, with support for specific counseling and educational services for teen mothers and fathers.

As part of Contra Costa County, California's strategy, an outreach and mentoring program has been designed for two female populations: at-risk females in the City of Richmond, recruited through school and community outreach, and female offenders returning to the community from secure confinement.

- ❖ **Big Brothers/Big Sisters Mentoring Program.** This will assist 65 girls per year aged 9 to 14 from single-parent families who are assessed as most at risk for juvenile delinquency, gang involvement, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, welfare dependency, and/or dropping out of school. This program is funded from April 1997 through March 2000.
- ◆ **The Grand Street Settlement House Mentoring Program.** At least 60 mentors and youth will be matched over a three year period. This will provide guidance, promote personal growth and responsibility, deepen involvement in school and community and discourage involvement in gangs, drugs, and violence through the Grand Jump to Success Program. Project goals are academic improvement, reduction in the dropout rate, reduction in gang activity, and program participant retention. This program is funded from April 1997-March 2000.
- ◆ **Prevention and Parity Girls in Juvenile Justice.** This 1996 publication addresses key issues affecting how the juvenile justice system can meet girls' needs, including the nature and extent of girls' involvement in juvenile delinquency and the juvenile justice system, specific factors placing girls at risk, variables affecting how girls are treated by the juvenile justice system, and effective programs for prevention, intervention, and treatment.
- **Female Offenders in the Juvenile Justice System.** The National Center for Juvenile Justice explored several study questions:
 - How many females are arrested and processed by the juvenile justice system each year?
 - How does this compare to males?
 - Has the rate and severity of female delinquency changed in recent years?
 - What happens to female juvenile offenders once they are referred to juvenile court?
 - Are young females handled differently than males, and has the population of females in out-of-home placement changed?

In the report, *Female Offenders in the Juvenile Justice System*, published in June 1996, these questions are answered using data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reporting Program, the National Juvenile Court Data Archive, and the biannual Census of Public Juvenile Detention Correctional and Shelter Facilities (more commonly known as the Children in Custody census).

- ◆ **Training and Technical Assistance.** Beginning in 1996, and with funding through FY 1998, the DOJ will provide training and technical assistance to states to promote establishment of state-level gender-specific programs focusing on the strengths and capabilities of females. A broad spectrum of policymakers and community-based youth agencies and juvenile detention and correctional programs will receive training and technical assistance to initiate, refine, and expand services for juvenile female offenders.
- **The Federal Interagency Partnership Program Cities in Schools, Inc.** Through training and technical assistance to states and local communities, CIS, Inc. brings social, employment, mental health, drug prevention, entrepreneurship, and other resources to high-risk youth and their families at the school level. This includes a holistic focus on behaviors that promote health and wellness, prevent specific injuries and illnesses, prevent high-risk social behaviors, intervene to assist youth who are in need, and help support those who are already exhibiting special health care needs. This program will be funded through FY 1997.
- **Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse.** Funded as a component of the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS), the Clearinghouse has access to publications, articles, programs, and reports on family strengthening, parenting training, teen pregnancy, at-risk females, female offenders, and related topics in the NCJRS library and data base collection, as well as information on programs related to the above subject areas through the Partners Against Violence Network (PAVNET). This contract will be continued through FY 1998.

RESEARCH

Girl's Developmental Needs. Department of Agriculture research addresses the developmental needs of girls. USDA-sponsored research covers such topics as child care for the rural poor and the role of family gender attitudes in early adolescent development. Identifying gender-specific program issues and trends is one objective of USDA research on programs which serve children.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AS EMPLOYER

Department of Defense Programs. DoD has a youth services program for children of active duty military personnel and civilian employees at defense installations. The program includes life skills enhancement, fitness and sports, and enrichment activities. Youth services also offer

courses on pregnancy prevention targeted at the girl child. DoD youth centers offer school age programs in computer use and academic counseling.

L.4. Eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development, and training.

[See also discussion in B.1. and B. 5.]

SPONSORED PROGRAMS

4-H. The Department of Agriculture's 4-H Program traditionally provided gender-segregated programs and awards. When this practice was abolished by the Education and Training Act of 1973, efforts were made to ensure that programs served the needs and interests of both boys and girls. Since then, the number of girls involved in 4-H has increased, and girls presently constitute 52% of enrollment. Girls have also consistently won a disproportionate number of National 4-H awards and scholarships each year. Currently, 4-H and USDA Youth Science and Technology programs focus on increasing math, science, and technology skills of girls and young women.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AS EMPLOYER

Department of Defense Education Activity Strategic Plan. The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) Strategic Plan targets narrowing the achievement gap of girls in math and science by 50% by the year 2000. DoDEA is also committed to narrowing the gap in mean SAT and ACT sub-test scores along racial, ethnic, and gender lines. DoDEA programs are for children of Department of Defense personnel at military installations.

L.5. Eliminate discrimination against girls in health and nutrition.

- ◆ **Female Adolescent Campaign.** SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention launched a public information campaign in June 1996 to help delay the onset and reduce the use of drugs among girls age 9-14. The campaign has been developed in concert with HHS's "Safe Passages" initiative to reach out to young girls in their formative years and address the health and social issues they face, including poverty; dropping out of school; violence; mental health problems; unprotected sex resulting in pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS; and alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use.

SMOKING PREVENTION

Federal regulations. Lung cancer is the number one cancer killer of American women, and smoking is the primary risk factor for this disease. Smoking rates are alarmingly high for

teenage girls. Regulations are now in place to restrict the sale and distribution of cigarettes to protect children and adolescents.

[See C.2. Tobacco Use and Women: Children and Adolescents for full description.]

Public Education. HHS has initiated an anti-smoking educational partnership with the U.S. Women's Soccer Team, directly targeting adolescent women. The PHS Office of Women's Health has developed a smoking prevention campaign with Girl Scouts USA.

[See also the discussion of "Girl Power!" under L.3.]

FOOD ASSISTANCE AND NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Food Programs. The Department of Agriculture administers many programs designed to improve children's health by improving their nutritional status:

- The National School Lunch Program (serving over 23.8 million children in over 94,000 schools on a daily basis).
- The School Breakfast Program (5.9 million children daily).
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (served over 2.4 million children daily in FY 1995).
- The Summer Food Service Program (serving over 2.1 million children daily in over 28,000 sites during July 1995).
- The Homeless Children Nutrition Program (a new program with 94 sites serving subsidized meals to over 2,700 children monthly).
- The Special Milk Program.

Although none of these programs are limited to serving girls, the benefits provided are critical in supporting their nutrition and health.

Nutrition Programs. Diet is linked to health, and chronic diet-related disease often begins in childhood. Proper nutrition and good health are also critical to education achievement. Since eating habits are firmly established by age 12, it is essential that healthy dietary patterns be formed early.

The School Meals Initiative for Healthy Children. To help ensure healthy eating, USDA is leading an ongoing effort to improve the nutritional quality of school meals: The School Meals Initiative for Healthy Children. This initiative is updating nutritional standards in the school meals program to meet the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. The implementation tool, Team Nutrition, leverages government resources through public/private partnerships with organizations such as the Walt Disney Co. and Scholastic, Inc. Thus Team Nutrition promotes food choices for a healthful diet through the media, schools, families, and community.

Team Nutrition Schools. Team Nutrition activities are coordinated at the local level through designated Team Nutrition Schools. These schools represent the community focal point for individuals and organizations with a shared interest in working for healthier school meals and more nutrition information for children and families. Currently, there are over 17,000 schools participating in Team Nutrition.

- ❖ **Addressing Nutritional Needs of Adolescent Girls through Team Nutrition.** USDA has committed to expanding Team Nutrition to 10-18-year olds (to date, efforts have focused on grades K-5). USDA will develop delivery mechanisms appropriate for this age group for promoting nutrition and physical activity as key components of a health lifestyle. As part of this effort, USDA will consider both how to address nutrition and health issues specific to the needs of adolescent girls, and how to best communicate the Team Nutrition message to this group.

RESEARCH

Girl's Health Needs. Department of Agriculture research in a number of areas addresses the health needs of girls. USDA-sponsored research covers such topics as obesity in young African-American women and the impact of eating disorders and lifestyle factors on bone development in adolescent girls. Identifying gender-specific program issues and trends is one objective of USDA research on programs which serve children. For example, USDA research shows that girls participate less frequently in school meals programs, particularly in older grades, prompting investigation into the reasons for this difference.

L.6. Eliminate the economic exploitation of child labor and protect young girls at work.

ENFORCING CHILD LABOR LAWS IN THE U.S.

The Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division's targeted initiative for increasing compliance with U.S. child labor laws is patterned after the strategies used in its "No Sweat" garment industry initiative — education, enforcement, and recognition [see A.1. for a description of this initiative]. Wage and Hour supports work opportunities for young men and women in this country, while at the same time seeking to ensure that their job experiences do not negatively impact their health, well-being, or educational opportunities. Wage and Hour promotes child labor compliance through the following:

- Educational outreach to employers, teachers, parents, and other governmental agencies.
- Redesigned enforcement intervention and penalty assessment policies that stress partnering in compliance and a focus on the more serious child labor offenses.

While the primary responsibility lies with Wage and Hour, the initiative includes a partnership component involving other law enforcement agencies. It also relies on enlisting the support of

religious or advocacy groups and socially responsible businesses as a means to leverage resources.

INTERNATIONAL CHILD LABOR

Research and Reporting. In response to a direct request from Congress in FY 1994, the Department of Labor Bureau of International Labor Affairs established a specialized unit to investigate, research, and report on the plight of child labor around the world, particularly in the production of goods imported into the U.S. ILAB has established itself, and thus the U.S. Government, as one of the most important and reliable sources of information and policy recommendations on the exploitation of child labor.

By the Sweat and Toil of Children. ILAB's first two major publications under its Congressional mandate, *By the Sweat and Toil of Children*, describes the low road of abysmal standards and exploitation of children working in certain manufacturing, mining, and commercial agriculture industries, as well as the exploitation of child slaves in service industries. The DOL held public hearings in preparation for each of its reports.

- ◆ ***Forced Labor: The Prostitution of Children.*** On September 28, 1995, ILAB sponsored a symposium, *Forced Labor: The Prostitution of Children*, and published the proceedings.
- ◆ ***The Apparel Industry and Codes of Conduct: A Solution to the International Child Labor Problem?*** In October 1996, ILAB released its fourth publication, *The Apparel Industry and Codes of Conduct: A Solution to the International Child Labor Problem?*, fulfilling another Congressional request. This report focuses on the major U.S. garment importers; their subsidiaries, contractors, and subcontractors; and their codes of conduct regarding the use of exploitative child labor in overseas production facilities. It also examines efforts of U.S. companies and non-governmental organizations to eliminate exploitative child labor in goods produced for export to the U.S. In June 1996, ILAB held a public hearing to gather information from all sectors for the report. Representatives of DOL also conducted site visits to a number of countries and factories to see first hand the conditions under which garments are made for export to the U.S.
- ❖ ***Analysis of Additional U.S. Importers.*** In FY 1997, Congress has directed ILAB to complete another report, analyzing efforts of U.S. importers in additional sectors where exploitative child labor is a problem.

INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

- ◆ ***Meeting of Labor Ministers.*** The DOL requested that the International Labour Organization hold a meeting of the world's Labor Ministers to discuss the growing problem of child labor. This meeting was held in June 1996 with the participation of the Secretary of Labor.

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor. For FY 1995, Congress appropriated \$2.1 million for ILAB to contribute to the International Labour Organization's International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC). ILO programs financed by ILAB include:

- in Thailand, helping children at risk of being exploited in the sex industry;
- in Bangladesh, removing children from the garment sector and giving them an education;
- in Brazil, removing children from the hazards of producing footwear for the world market;
- in the Philippines, undertaking the first national statistical survey on the incidence of child labor; and
- in Africa, responding to the needs of children in the commercial plantation sector.

❖ **Additional Funds.** In FY 1996, Congress appropriated an additional \$1.5 million to DOL to support the IPEC program. To date, ILAB has obligated \$5.1 million to IPEC for programs which may run through the year 2000. In 1997, ILAB will support two innovative programs assisting young girls at risk of being lured into prostitution:

- In northern Thailand, ILAB is contributing approximately \$200,000 for the second phase of a model program to implement a provincial plan of action aimed at the prevention of young girls from being sold, trafficked, or lured into prostitution. This second phase, which began in January 1997, will build upon existing programs for girls previously financed by ILAB.
- In Nepal, ILAB is contributing approximately \$300,000-\$400,000 to develop a program, at both community and national levels, to prevent child prostitution as well as combat trafficking of children across borders for purposes of prostitution. The program began in early 1997 and includes awareness-raising campaigns, a transit home for girls at risk, and education and training for children at risk. It is also developing training for law enforcement officials in Nepal and India to better monitor the trafficking of young girls between these two countries.

Both programs are enlisting the support of non-governmental organizations, teachers, community organizations, and local, regional, and national government officials.

Supporting Non-governmental Initiatives. DOL has promoted non-governmental initiatives, such as the Rugmark and Foul Ball Campaigns, to address the exploitation of child labor in certain industries.

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- ◆ **Military Services Program Combating the Child Prostitution Industry.** The Department of Defense has issued programmatic steps to be included in training programs and requires Military Services to carry out a program underscoring DoD's commitment to combating the child prostitution industry and ensuring that no DoD personnel knowingly or unknowingly support such activity.

L.7. Eradicate violence against the girl-child.

LEGISLATION

Federal laws have been passed addressing physical and sexual abuse of children and child sexual exploitation on federal land or where state or national borders were crossed for the purposes of criminal sexual activity. The U.S. statutes are gender neutral and apply to both boys and girls who are victims of abuse and exploitation.

The Child Protection Restoration and Penalties Act of 1990. The Department of Justice Civil Division is defending constitutional challenges to the Child Protection Restoration and Penalties Act of 1990 and its implementing regulations, which are aimed at combating the exploitation of children in sexually explicit publications.

The National Child Protection Act of 1993. This Act, administered by the Department of Justice, establishes a national background check system that enables child care providers to determine whether employees and prospective employees have criminal records involving child abuse offenses. The DOJ is encouraging states to comply with the National Child Protection Act by passing state laws on background screening of persons working with children.

The Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexually Violent Offender Registration Act of 1994. Part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, this Act provides states with a financial incentive to adopt effective registration systems for convicted child molesters and other persons convicted of sexually violent crimes. The Department of Justice administers the Act and has published guidelines to assist states in complying with the federal law.

Megan's Law. In 1996, a federal Megan's Law was passed, amending the Jacob Wetterling Act to require states to release relevant information about registered offenders when necessary to protect the public. Prior to the enactment of Megan's Law, the Jacob Wetterling Act permitted, but did not require such disclosure. The Justice Department recently published guidelines to implement Megan's Law.

The Department of Justice Civil Division has been defending the constitutionality of a New Jersey law, also called Megan's Law. On July 29, 1994, a seven-year-old New Jersey girl, Megan Kanka, was sexually assaulted and murdered by a twice-convicted sex offender who

moved in across the street from her family. At the time, there were no state laws authorizing notification of local law enforcement or the community concerning a sex offender's criminal history or presence in the neighborhood. Megan's Law created the New Jersey sex offender registration and notification system. In addition to defending New Jersey's "Megan's Law," the DOJ has participated in litigation defending the validity of sex offender registration and notification systems in New York, Connecticut, and Washington State.

The Pam Lyncher Sexual Tracking and Identification Act of 1996. This law requires the Attorney General to establish a national database at the FBI to track convicted sex offenders; requires the FBI to handle registration directly for sex offenders in states that do not have "minimally sufficient" sex offender registration programs (as defined by the Act); and amends the Jacob Wetterling Act to prescribe more stringent registration requirements in some areas.

- ❖ **Prosecutions.** Prosecutions for sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation will continue. The federal government is encouraging states to comply with the National Child Protection Act by passing state laws on background screening of persons working with children, and the Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexually Violent Offender Registration Act to pass state sex offender and notification programs.

SERVICES

Child Welfare Services. Department of Health and Human Services child welfare agencies provide a range of services to help keep families together, including:

- family preservation and support services;
 - child abuse and neglect services;
 - foster care and adoption services.
- ❖ **Foster Care and Adoption Assistance Programs.** Foster care and adoption assistance programs have been enacted to help states provide care for children who need placement outside their homes. These programs facilitate the placement of children in permanent adoptive homes, preventing long stays in foster care or institutions. In December 1996, the President announced his goal of doubling the number of adoptions by 2002. The implementation and development of this program by HHS includes the creation of many services previously unavailable, including incentives to states and tax credits to adoptive families.

The National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect. The goal of the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, located within HHS, is to decrease the number of annually reported cases of child abuse and neglect through a federal/state partnership.

Safe Kids/Safe Streets Program. This program is designed to improve community response to child and adolescent abuse and neglect and to break the cycle of early childhood victimization and later delinquency and/or criminality. A collaborative effort of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Executive Office of Weed and Seed, and the Violence Against

Women's Office, the program will be implemented by five grantees from March 1997 through February 2002.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AS EMPLOYER

Department of Defense. DoD has established a Family Advocacy Command Assistance Team to respond to multiple cases of out-of-home child sexual abuse. The team is composed of skilled clinicians, legal experts, public affairs professionals, child advocates, pediatricians, and investigators.

DoD Family Advocacy programs consistently educate girls on potential risks to their safety. This effort also involves educating physicians and emergency room personnel on how to detect and identify instances of child abuse.

[See also the discussion under Strategic Objective D, "Violence against Women."]

L.8. Promote the girl-child's awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life.

[See the discussion of the Department of Education's leadership development programs under Strategic Objective G.2.]

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Teens, Crime, and the Community (TCC) Program. Through its curriculum the program helps teens understand how crime and youth issues, such as peer pressure to use drugs, alcohol and tobacco, safe dating, teen sex and pregnancy, and school problems, affect them and their families, friends, and communities. TCC involves the teens in service-related activities to make their communities safe from crime and its consequences. The OJJDP funds the National Crime Prevention Council which works in partnership with the National Institute for Citizen Education in the Law, and in turn funds local programs nationwide through FY 1998.

Youth for Justice. Through five national organizations and a network of state programs, young people in schools, communities, and other juvenile settings learn about the foundations of our constitutional republic and the responsibilities and rights of each citizen. This National Law-Related Education Program enhances learning by providing opportunities for young people to participate in and take responsibility for making their schools and communities safer. Curricula include the study of democracy, street law, and civic education with issues that include equal opportunity under the law for women and minorities, equal access housing and education issues, safe dating protocols and free speech. Over 1 million students, from K through grade 12, and 16,000 teachers have participated in the programs which are funded through FY 1997.

Child Development-Community Policing Program. The program brings police officers and mental health professionals together to provide interdisciplinary intervention to children who are victims, witnesses, or perpetrators of violent crime. It addresses the psychological impact of the chronic exposure to community violence on children and families and attempts to interrupt the cycle of violence impacting so many children. Funded by OJJDP from FY 1993 through FY 1998, this collaborative effort of the New Haven Department of Police Services and the Child Study Center at Yale University School of Medicine serves as a national model for police-mental health partnerships across the country.

REDUCING TEEN PREGNANCY

In 1997, HHS launched its **National Strategy to Prevent Teen Pregnancy** — a comprehensive plan to prevent teen pregnancies and to support and encourage adolescents to remain abstinent. The new strategy will strengthen the Department's ongoing efforts to assure that every community in the country is working to prevent out-of-wedlock teenage pregnancies. HHS-supported programs that include teen pregnancy prevention already reach an estimated 30% of communities in the United States. Two such programs are:

The Community Coalition Partnership Program for the Prevention of Teen Pregnancy.

This is one of HHS's most comprehensive and innovative teen pregnancy prevention programs. In 1995, two-year grants were awarded to community-wide coalitions in communities with high rates of teenage pregnancy. New funding in FY 1997 will help the 13 community coalition partnerships to implement their action plans for supporting effective and sustainable teen pregnancy prevention programs, evaluate the impact of these programs, as well as to support related data collection, evaluation and dissemination activities.

The Adolescent Family Life Program. This supports demonstration projects, about one-third of which currently provide abstinence-focused educational services, to prevent early unintended pregnancies, STDs and HIV/AIDS. In FY 1997, this program will use additional new funding to enable communities to develop and implement about 100 abstinence-based education and demonstration projects throughout the country.

L.9. Strengthen the role of the family in improving the status of the girl-child.

- ◆ **Family Leadership.** Recognizing the link between child abuse and juvenile delinquency, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has funded (through November 1997) the Parents Anonymous (PA) Program to provide a comprehensive model of neighborhood-based, shared leadership to families in low income, high crime areas. PA organizations in 11 states are implementing this national initiative dedicated to serving the needs of ethnic groups, including Native Americans, African-Americans, Asians, Latinos, and Appalachian communities.

◆ **Family-Strengthening Programs.** Through an award to the University of Utah's Department of Health and Education, this project seeks to increase and enhance family-strengthening programs for families of high-risk youth nationwide by disseminating information on model family-strengthening approaches, providing training and technical assistance on implementation barriers and issues, and helping communities select and evaluate programs. This initiative has produced a document, *Effective Parenting Strategies for Families of High-Risk Youth* (December 1993), showcasing a representative group of 25 promising programs. This program is funded through FY 1997.

Appendices

Abbreviations and Web Sites of Federal Agencies Included in This Report

USAID	Agency for International Development http://www.usaid.gov/	TREAS	Department of the Treasury http://www.ustreas.gov/
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency http://www.odci.gov/cia/ciahome.html	DOT	Department of Transportation http://www.dot.gov/
USDA	Department of Agriculture http://www.usda.gov/	EPA	Environmental Protection Agency http://www.epa.gov/
DOC	Department of Commerce http://www.doc.gov/	EEOC	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission http://www.eeoc.gov/
DOD	Department of Defense http://www.dod.gov/	FDA	Food and Drug Administration http://www.fda.gov/
ED	Department of Education http://www.ed.gov	GSA	General Services Administration http://www.gsa.gov/
HHS	Department of Health and Human Services http://www.dhhs.gov/	OPM	Office of Personnel Management http://www.opm.gov/ http://www.usajobs.opm.gov
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development http://www.hud.gov/	PICW	President's Interagency Council on Women http://secretary.state.gov/www/iacw/ index.html
DOI	Department of the Interior http://www.doi.gov/	SBA	Small Business Administration http://www.usda.gov/
DOJ	Department of Justice http://www.usdoj.gov/	USIA	U.S. Information Agency http://www.usia.gov/
DOL	Department of Labor http://www.dol.gov/	OWIO	White House Office of Women's Initiatives and Outreach http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/EOP/ Women/OWIO/
DOS	Department of State http://www.state.gov/		

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